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The China Association: Fostering Trade,  
Networks and Sociability, 1889 to circa  
1955

**Robert Jones**

PhD

2018

The China Association: Fostering Trade,  
Networks and Sociability, 1889 to circa  
1955

**Robert Jones**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements of the University of  
Northumbria at Newcastle for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy

Research undertaken in the Faculty of  
Arts, Design & Social Sciences

November 2018

## **Abstract**

In 1889, a group of British returned migrants from China gathered for a formal dinner in London, resolving that the gathering would become a recurring function, and also that steps should be taken to establish an association representing their interests. This thesis examines the history of the body subsequently founded, the China Association, investigating its records alongside contemporary newspapers, periodicals and directories, as well as the papers of a number of individual members. In doing so, the thesis traces the establishment, objectives and activities of the CA over a period of 65 years. To understand how the CA operated, the thesis first focuses on the Association's membership, examining the 111 founding members alongside later officers and key individuals. The study then investigates the three principle aims of the Association, which were to provide: (1) a political voice for British interests in China through the creation of links with the British government; (2) a platform of sociability for returnees through a variety of events; and finally (3) charity to deserving causes as well as providing philanthropic backing to collections including those for education. While disparate on the surface, these aims were drawn together by the underlying desire of the Association—and central aim of its leaders—to improve the state of British trade and businesses in China.

This study offers the first comprehensive examination of a return migrant association, identifying it as a structure that served to facilitate the strengthening of trade, networks and sociability, whilst also serving as a political lobbying group.

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## **Acknowledgements**

This thesis could not have been undertaken without considerable support. The journey from start to completion has been a long one, but it is a true testament to the support that I have received from numerous sources that at no point has it become overly arduous, or unenjoyable.

First amongst those to whom great thanks are due are my supervision team. Professor Tanja Bueltmann as principal supervisor has provided consistent and enlightening feedback throughout in concert with Professor Tony Webster as second supervisor. Alongside these, thanks must also go to the wider research community at Northumbria University who have provided a stimulating and welcoming work environment. Particular thanks must go to Dr. James McConnel and Dr. Joe Hardwick for offering insight into the teaching process and Professor Irene Hardill for comments at significant milestones. To Northumbria University itself thanks are also due for providing the studentship which made this research possible.<sup>1</sup>

Outside of Northumbria, thanks must go to the numerous archivists at the School of Oriental and African Studies, British Library, Cambridge University Library and Toronto University Thomas Fisher Library who ensured that research trips proceeded smoothly and efficiently. I am further indebted to the examination team, Professor Robert Bickers and Professor David Gleeson for their feedback and comments which have brought this work to completion.

Final thanks are those due to people outside of this academic sphere who have consistently supported me throughout this undertaking. My parents, Dawn and Andrew, my brother Graeme, and my grandparents, Jean, Bill, Norah and George for supporting me through the process and my whole education. My wider circle of friends, Sam, Scott, Gav, Tom, Andrew, Josh, Caitlin, Penelope, Danielle, Italy and all others for providing distractions and relief. Finally, for her constant support throughout, thanks must go to my amazing girlfriend Jamie.

Without any of these people, completing this thesis would not have been anywhere near as satisfying or enjoyable of an undertaking.

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<sup>1</sup> The studentship was awarded by Northumbria University in support of Professor Tanja Bueltmann's Economic and Social Research Council Grant ES/K008161/1, 'European, Ethnic and Expatriate: A Longitudinal Comparison of German and British Social Networking and Associational Formations in Modern-day Asia.'

### **Author's Declaration**

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that the work fully acknowledges the opinions, ideas and contributions of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Faculty Ethics Committee on 15/07/2015.

**I declare the word count of this thesis is 84,779 words**

**Name: Robert Jones**

**Signature:**

**Date: 30/11/2018**

### **Abbreviations used**

BAT - British American Tobacco

BCC - British and Chinese Corporation

CA - China Association

CIFRF - China International Famine Relief Fund

FBI - Federation of British Industries

HSBC - Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation

ICI - Imperial Chemical Industries

PRC - People's Republic of China

SOS - School of Oriental Studies

SOAS - School of Oriental and African Studies

## INTRODUCTION

On 4 March 1889, 130 gentlemen resident in Britain, but all with connections to East Asia, sat down to dine at the Thatched House Club in London. After time spent in reminiscence and an ‘excellent’ repast, conversation turned to a more serious matter. As the chair of the evening, Sir Alfred Dent, explained:

The real object ... of their gathering together was to see if something could not be done towards founding a permanent institution (Hear, hear). He would suggest that they should take the matter into practical consideration on a more convenient occasion than the present. It might, however, be thought desirable to select without delay a provisional committee to draft a constitution of what he thought might be called “the China Association.” (Hear, hear, and applause)<sup>1</sup>

After all, Dent went on to remind those gathered, the Straits Association was now ‘recognised by the Colonial Office, and he believed by the authorities in Singapore’, returnees from Japan had now ‘started [their] annual dinner’ and ‘lately Ceylon had started its association.’<sup>2</sup> All of these, Dent stressed, added to the wealth of colonial institutions that already existed to support India—‘its own council’—and Australia, Canada and the Cape Colony which ‘each had their own special organisations’ and ‘behind them, again, the all-powerful colonial institute.’<sup>3</sup> For British interests in China, there was nothing comparable, and Dent was clear in his belief that a ‘China Association’ would ‘become a powerful and representative institution, useful alike to the trading and resident community, as well as to the Foreign Office and British officers abroad.’<sup>4</sup>

Considering the number of associations and institutions Alfred Dent was able to draw upon on to illustrate the potential of the proposed China Association [CA], it

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<sup>1</sup> The Inaugural China Dinner: Proposed China Association, 4 March 1889, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>2</sup> The Straits Association, originally the Straits Settlements Association, was founded in 1868 to ensure the interests of the Straits Settlement were appropriately represented in London. See C.M. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore, 1819-2005* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), p.49 and pp.163-4. For a discussion of some of its early political undertakings see Anthony Webster, ‘The Development of British Commercial and Political Networks in the Straits Settlements 1800 to 1868: The Rise of a Colonial and Regional Economic Identity?’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 45, 4 (July, 2011), pp.899-929.

<sup>3</sup> The Inaugural China Dinner: Proposed China Association, 4 March 1889, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>4</sup> Dent was, he made clear, referring to ‘Shanghai and the Treaty Ports’ and not to ‘Hongkong, which as [the guests] knew had its own governor and its own legislative council’, although the CA would later concern itself with the colony. The Inaugural China Dinner: Proposed China Association, 4 March 1889, CHAS/MCP/1.

is clear that the CA was not formed in a vacuum, nor entirely out of a sense of proactivism. It was, in many ways, simply a reaction to an environment in which associations that brought together returnees from abroad became an increasingly common feature in an already burgeoning associational world.

In that sense the foundation of the CA was a rather typical event, repeated across Britain and her dominions, for as recent scholarship has convincingly argued, the British became a nation of joiners. From early roots in the seventeenth century, Britain developed into an ‘associational world’ where personal identity, but also civil society and wider political and societal developments, were shaped by the clubs, societies and associations that people chose to set up or join.<sup>5</sup> These associations came in a variety of forms, with outlets for returnees from formal and informal Empire gaining popularity from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. The uses and operational scope of these voluntary associations were wide. Many enabled the creation of social capital, playing a key role in the development of trust to allow the creation of linkages and networks. As urbanization accelerated the development of associations in the nineteenth century, many also played a central role in developing new social hierarchies, and even power oligarchies.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes lines blurred as associations moved out of the voluntary sector and begin to seek governmental support for their aims, becoming what might be better referred to as pressure—or organized interest—groups. This blurring of lines, and the potential for tension and disagreements within associations that emerged as a result, is an important theme in this thesis. Although the zenith of this associational world has potentially passed, Britain remains a nation of joiners, and the CA continues to exist to the present day.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The most comprehensive work on the development of British associational culture, and which coined this term, is Peter Clark’s, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800: the origins of an associational world* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). A good introduction to similar developments is offered in Graeme Morton, Boudien de Vries and R.J. Morris (eds.), *Civil Society, Associations and Urban Places: Class, Nation and Culture in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> R.J. Morris, ‘Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites, 1750-1850: An Analysis’, *The Historical Journal*, 26, 1 (1983), pp.101-2.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Clark concludes his work by noting considerable growth in a number of voluntary sectors post World War Two, the most notable recent growth being the booming membership of the national trust and RSPB. See Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800*, pp.470-91. Robert D. Putnam argues for the declining associationalism of the USA in his article ‘Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital’, *Journal of Democracy*, 6, 1 (1995), pp.65-78 and later work *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), in which he argues, conversely to Clark, that the growth of large environmental based groups does not represent associationalism as such, as they often simply grant honorific membership in exchange for a joining fee, offering little chance to meet and create social capital. See, specifically, chapter nine.

Yet while voluntary associations emerged as a cornerstone of British life, they were by no means confined to Britain, and spread around the world in the cultural baggage of those who left the British Isles. The highest proportional rate of this outmigration occurred between 1646 and 1670, with the seventeenth century seeing approximately 1 million people emigrate from the British and Irish Isles, the vast majority of them English.<sup>8</sup> It is from this point onwards that we can identify the spread of associations abroad, chiefly including ethnic associations designed to help migrants in distress.<sup>9</sup> Migration figures for the eighteenth century are more confused, and have been called ‘a quagmire’, but it is clear that there was less emigration from the British Isles than in the previous century.<sup>10</sup> A final boom came between 1815 and 1930. Numbers grew rapidly, and about 18.7 million people left the UK (11.4 million of these from Great Britain).<sup>11</sup> The further proliferation and spread of associations throughout North America and Australasia in particular was tied to these patterns of migration. The sheer scale of these movements of people, however, can sometimes hide more than it reveals, as the viewing of these movements under an umbrella term—migration—is overly simplistic for there were many types of migrants. The most important distinction for this thesis is that between temporary sojourners and permanent settlers—a distinction explored in more detail below. Beyond this, the very scale of migration ensured that a ‘staggering array of social types’ were involved. Families, skilled and unskilled labourers, domestic servants, artisans, miners, agriculturalists, technicians, professionals, missionaries, soldiers, teachers and doctors are just a few individual classifications of the people who were involved.<sup>12</sup> Motivations, too, were numerous—unique to the individual, constantly altering, and impossible to comprehensively list. Some migrated of their own free will, seeking a better life and standard of living in the colonies or elsewhere. Others had little choice, and migrated due to economic pressure, or else were coerced and removed from their

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<sup>8</sup> James Horn, ‘British Diaspora: Emigration from Britain, 1650-1815’ in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire Vol II: The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.30.

<sup>9</sup> For example the Scots’ Charitable Society of Boston, which was first set up in 1657. For details see Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together: Ethnicity, Civility and Formal Sociability in the Scottish Diaspora to 1930* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014), pp.69-71.

<sup>10</sup> Eric Richards, *Britannia’s Children: Emigration from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland Since 1600* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), pp.4-6.

<sup>11</sup> Marjory Harper and David Constantine, *Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series: Migration and Empire* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2010), p.2.

<sup>12</sup> Richards, *Britannia’s Children*, pp.297-8.

land, while others, as convicts, were transported against their will.<sup>13</sup> Specifics of migration to China and the types of migrants most prominent in East Asia are also discussed and defined below.

What was a constant, however, was that when travelling across the world, these British migrants brought associational structures with them. Recent works have shown—to choose but a few examples—how ethnic societies helped migrants find their feet in a difficult new world, providing charitable help, or offering social gatherings with a flavour of home.<sup>14</sup> Geographical societies, most prominently the Royal Geographical Society, helped to map new frontiers, providing both practical information valuable for Imperial strategy and the knowledge and understanding to allow British commercial aims, and its subjects overseas, to flourish.<sup>15</sup> Freemasonry proved exceptionally adaptable to an imperial setting, developing—although it was by no means alone in doing so—business networks, and even co-opting native interests into the associational landscape.<sup>16</sup> At other times business interests grouped together to set up Chambers of Commerce which spread to colonial America and beyond, with 13 chambers ‘abroad’ by 1913, and seven existing, at varying times, in China.<sup>17</sup> Together, all of these groups formed part of the basis for networks that criss-crossed the globe and were an important mechanism that kept formal and informal Empire together.

These networks were essential if British interests were to prosper over large transnational distances. And like associational structures, they quickly spread

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<sup>13</sup> For a brief discussion on some of the motivations prominent throughout the eighteenth century see Horn, ‘British Diaspora: Emigration from Britain, 1650-1815’, pp.35-51. For some of the reasons behind mid nineteenth century booms in numbers of emigrants see Richards, *Britannia’s Children*, pp.152-73.

<sup>14</sup> Scots were particularly prominent in doing so. See, for example, Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together* or Angela McCarthy, ‘Scottish Migrant Ethnic identities in the British Empire since the 19th century’ in John M. Mackenzie and T.M. Devine (eds.), *Scotland and the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.5.

<sup>15</sup> An overview of how these societies, and scientific exploration in general, proved useful to British interests is Robert A. Stafford, ‘Scientific Exploration and Empire’ in Andrew Porter, (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire Vol III: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>16</sup> See Jessica Harland-Jacobs, ‘All in the Family: Freemasonry and the British Empire in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> c.’, *The Journal of British Studies*, 42, 4, (2003) and “‘Hands across the Sea’: The Masonic Network, British Imperialism, and the North Atlantic World”, *Geographical Review*, 89, 2 (1999) for the influence of freemasonry within the British Empire.

<sup>17</sup> Robert J. Bennet, *Local Business Voice: The History of Chambers of Commerce in Britain, Ireland, and Revolutionary America 1760-2011* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.11. Unfortunately, Bennet’s work does not study the Chambers of Commerce that existed in China beyond noting their existence. This thesis notes, however, a selection of occasions when they came into contact with (and later created formalised links with) the CA.

throughout the British World. Magee and Thompson have stressed quite how heavily the British World relied on networks underpinned by social capital and the resultant sharing of information in guiding migration, the development of markets for British goods, and British investment overseas.<sup>18</sup> In Asia such networks quickly came to encompass business interests, such as those of the Straits Settlements, which created a 'network of commercial and political connections' with 'peers, politicians and government officials in Britain' to ensure their needs were represented at home, which would culminate in the creation of the Straits Association which Alfred Dent and the CA hoped to emulate.<sup>19</sup> Others in different locales were 'acutely aware that marginalisation from imperial discursive networks' would see a decrease in political and material support. To counter such difficulties they 'strove continually to fashion circuits of communication with vital metropolitan interests' to make their voices heard back in the home country.<sup>20</sup> Be it through a formal association, or an informal network, the passage of information and the creation of linkages was a key mechanism linking metropole and periphery.

Nor was the spread of these associations and networks confined to formal Empire. Complex trade networks, reliant on credit and therefore trust, were operative in China from the earliest days of British involvement, notably those behind the tea trade.<sup>21</sup> These and other associations were founded and run by individuals and groups from within civil society; they could aid the state but were not state-run, and therefore wherever there was a British presence the associational world followed. China could boast, for example, Scottish ethnic societies in no fewer than twelve locations in the first quarter of the twentieth century.<sup>22</sup> Shanghai alone played host at the time of the foundation of the CA in 1889 to 31 clubs and institutions (although a small number catered specifically for nationalities other than the British) and a further 11 masonic

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<sup>18</sup> Gary B. Magee and Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of people, goods and capital in the British World, c.1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>19</sup> Webster, 'The Development of British Commercial and Political Networks in the Straits Settlements', pp.899-901.

<sup>20</sup> Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth Century South Africa and Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp.6-7.

<sup>21</sup> Natasha Glaisyer, 'Networking: Trade and Exchange in the Eighteenth-Century British Empire', *The Historical Journal*, 46, 2 (June 2004), p.464.

<sup>22</sup> Buelmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.190. Of course, it must be noted that two of these (Hongkong and Weihaiwei) were actually part of the British Empire.



lodges.<sup>23</sup> Hongkong could, for the same year, claim to be home to 26 ‘Clubs, Societies, Institutions &c.’ and 11 masonic lodges of its own.<sup>24</sup> Adding nuance to these numbers, recent work has shown considerable formation of sub-identities for British residents in China, with clubs and associations becoming discriminatory in their selection of members, rather than simply catering to the whole of the British community. Class certainly played a role, emphasised by elite colonial clubs such as the Shanghai Club, and saw associational life in East Asia split also along these lines as well as ethnicity and other factors.<sup>25</sup>

In light of the numbers of clubs and associations available it comes as no surprise that many of those who became members of the CA after their return to Britain were, or had been, also members of China-based associations. As much is revealed clearly from even a superficial analysis of the CA’s original membership which, as is discussed in detail in chapter two, offers the greatest scope for investigation. First secretary (and later president) R.S. Gundry was an ‘inveterate committee man’ and a high ranking Mason, while founder and chairman William Keswick had been chairman of the Chamber of Commerce for both Shanghai and Hongkong, and a trustee of the Hongkong Sailors Home.<sup>26</sup> A glance at the Hongkong directory for 1882 which documents Keswick holding some of these roles—to choose but one example of location and date—reveals five more founding members of the CA serving in roles in various clubs and societies. Atwell Coxon was the president of the Hongkong Cricket Club and a committee member of the Choral Society, Amateur Dramatic Club and the Hongkong Club, alongside which he still found time to act as the Consul for Belgium. Thomas Jackson was a treasurer for Hongkong Public School, chairman of the Victoria Recreation Club, a member of the committee of the Chamber of Commerce, and finally a trustee for St. John’s Cathedral. A. McIver was a director of

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<sup>23</sup> The Chronicle & Directory for China, Corea, Japan, The Philippines, Chochin-China, Annam, Tonquin, Siam, Borneo, Straits Settlements, Malay States, &c., (with which is incorporated “the China directory”) for the year 1889 (Daily Press Office, Hongkong, 1889), pp.425-8.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp.286-9.

<sup>25</sup> See Robert Bickers, ‘Shanghaianders: The Formation and Identity of the British Settler Community in Shanghai’ *Past and Present*, 159 (May, 1998), pp.183-4; Buelmann, *Clubbing Together*, pp.174-9; Benjamin B. Cohen, *In the Club: Associational Life in Colonial South Asia* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), specifically pp.68-71 for the Shanghai Club, though the work as a whole offers a wider study of their role in creating and maintaining networks.

<sup>26</sup> For a short biography of Gundry see Paul French, *Through the Looking Glass: China’s Foreign Journalists from the Opium Wars to Mao* (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2009), pp.56-7. For William Keswick’s involvement in these bodies see “Obituary.” *Times* (London, England), 11 March 1912, p.11 and *The Chronicle and Directory for China, Japan and the Philippines for 1882 (with which is incorporated the “China Directory”* (Hongkong: Daily Press Office, 1882), p.222.

the Sailor's Home. Meanwhile, N.J. Ede was a committee member for the Humane Society, and a trustee of Union Church. Finally, A.P. McEwen was a member of the City Hall committee, the Chamber of Commerce Committee, the Diocesan Home and Orphanage Committee and a trustee of St. John's Cathedral.<sup>27</sup> To find six of the CA's original 111 members serving as officers of voluntary associations and bodies in a single location at the same time, while only offering a snapshot, is suggestive of the deep reach and spread of associationalism. For the CA this meant that it could easily draw upon men with previous experience of leading voluntary associations in East Asia. We can only speculate how many CA members we would find as members of these clubs, societies and associations, were full membership lists available. But it is clear regardless that by the time the CA was established British associational life in China was well-developed and extensive. As the men engaged in the plethora of clubs and societies returned home to Britain, the CA found a pool of recruits with knowledge and experience of East Asia on whom to draw for support, some of whom may well have met and developed connections through the flourishing associational scene in the region.

Despite the recent work outlined here having shed more light on the operations and scope of many associations, and while patterns of outmigration are broadly known, the same cannot be said about returnees. Return migration generally is an understudied field—a result primarily of difficulties surrounding the source base that does not lend itself well to establishing details on movements that are rarely adequately captured in official records, or lost in a 'statistical soup.'<sup>28</sup> This problem is not specific to returnees from China or Asia, but is amplified by the transitory nature of many of the movements from locations there. Marjory Harper has also noted that more work is needed on the reintegration of returnees in home societies, their motives, and the 'mechanisms by which they maintained links with the various places where they had alighted.'<sup>29</sup> The study of the CA can go some way towards opening up new routes into better understanding these deficits, offering a way into the life of returnees, shedding light on who they were and what they did after their return.

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<sup>27</sup> For all of these men see *The Chronicle and Directory for China, Japan and the Philippines for 1882*, pp.217-25.

<sup>28</sup> A brief introduction to such problems can be found in Dudley Baines, *Emigration from Europe 1815-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.12-13. The term 'statistical soup' is drawn from the Introduction to Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The return movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p.8.

<sup>29</sup> Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings*, introduction pp.2-8.

Some recent work has been valuable in this respect. Elizabeth Buettner and Kathleen Burke note, for example, that British Empire returnees were likely to socialize together, in clubs or through the creation of entire communities, while research on other national groups has revealed that Polish and Italian returnees grouped together either on a formal or informal basis.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, scholarship exploring the development of pressure groups suggests that the East India Company's activities in London can be viewed as that of a political interest group comprised of returnees. References to groups such as the Planters Association, a group of planters who had returned from the Caribbean in order to exert political influence to improve their business prospects provide another example, suggesting the Empire and British overseas interests were key in shaping the organisation of returnees.<sup>31</sup> Placed within this wider context, this thesis offers a new way of investigating return movements and provides the first comprehensive overview of how a return migrant association was set up and how it functioned.<sup>32</sup>

In this way, too, the CA offers an avenue into understanding the reasons and motivations behind the return of a select group of migrants. Numerous motivations behind returns are possible, including 'success;... failure; homesickness; a call to return;... rejection of life overseas' and even beyond this a desire of second generation migrants to visit their native land, or even a return to found benevolent schemes to help other returnees (such as Scottish returnees who founded hospitals for returned soldiers) before again migrating.<sup>33</sup> Others were forced to return, their settlement

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<sup>30</sup> Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.330; Elizabeth Buettner, "'We Don't Grow Coffee and Bananas in Clapham Junction You Know!': Imperial Britons Back Home" in R. Bickers (ed.), *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons Over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.315; Kathleen Burke, 'Canada in Britain: Returned Migrants and the Canada Club' in Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The return movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Adam Walaszek (Piotr Mizia, translator), "'How Could it all appear so Rosy'": Re-emigrants from the United States in Poland, 1891-1924', *Polish American Studies*, 49, 2 (1992), pp.49-54; Dino Cinel, *The National Integration of Italian Return Migration, 1870-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.115-119.

<sup>31</sup> Graham Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain, 1720-1970: an essay in interpretation with original documents* (London: A. Laine, 1975), pp.18-27; Tilman W. Nechtman, *Nabobs: Empire and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p.18.

<sup>32</sup> A short overview of a body which shared some functions with the CA—the Canada Club—is, however, available, see Burke, 'Canada in Britain.'

<sup>33</sup> Mark Wyman, 'Emigrants returning: the evolution of a tradition', in Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The return movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p.21; Steve Murdoch, 'Children of the Diaspora: the 'homecoming' of the second-generation Scot in the seventeenth century' in Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The return movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp.59-60.

abroad made untenable by wider events.<sup>34</sup> Assessing the careers the members of the CA had pursued whilst in East Asia, the lives they led, and how this affected their membership and interaction with the Association will be discussed in this thesis.

The CA was chosen as the basis for this study for several reasons. First is a practical consideration relating to the size and depth of the CA archival collection (discussed in detail below). A second consideration was that the CA was itself a sizeable organisation, offering a route to study a number of return migrants in a single setting. Beyond the immediate benefit to better understanding the CA and return migration, and especially return migrant associations, a third aim of the thesis is to offer insight into the development of Sino-British relations by exposing the varied attempts of the CA, a hitherto understudied actor in this context, to influence relations between the two nations. Sino-British relations is a field of study which continues to grow in importance as China itself gains prominence on the world stage. Indeed, China remains acutely aware of the role Britain and other foreign powers played in its own development, and remembers it in the starkly unfavourable light as a century of ‘national humiliation’ characterised by unequal treaties, foreign exploitation, and the partial removal of its own sovereignty.<sup>35</sup> When the CA assumed the mantle of a group representative of the combined British interests in China, it made considerable efforts to facilitate a number of connections between Britain and China. These would manifest not only as efforts to influence British and Chinese government policy—both large scale, and by offering feedback more regularly on small commercial matters—but also in the creation of links between the two nations through a range of more diverse projects. Though assessing the success of the CA is sometimes difficult, it was nonetheless an active body, and an intermediary worthy of study, and understanding how it operated enhances not only our understanding of the CA as an association, but also its wider role. To investigate the CA as fully as possible in respect of the above aims, the thesis adopts a longitudinal approach. This permits extended consideration of developments over time, covering the period from the Association’s establishment until the mid-1950s. The study is connected to a wider ESRC-funded project which focused upon networking and social associations in Asia in a longitudinal context.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Murdoch, ‘Children of the Diaspora: the ‘homecoming’ of the second-generation Scot’, pp.69-70.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Bickers, *The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire, 1832-1914* (London: Penguin, 2012), pp.392-7.

<sup>36</sup> Project details: ES/K008161/1, ‘European, Ethnic and Expatriate: A Longitudinal Comparison of German and British Social Networking and Associational Formations in Modern-day Asia’.

## Definitions and approaches

In order to study the CA it is important to understand that, as an association, it did not only include individual members, but rather also those who represented particular firms and business interests. At this point we are not concerned with their individual or corporate identities, nor their specific actions and day to day patterns of life in China or Britain—these are explored throughout the thesis. Instead it is important to offer definitions and approaches to further refine our understanding of these men and firms in a wider context.

Turning first to the individuals who made up the CA, we know that the vast majority of members had resided, at some point, in China or East Asia. We can safely say, therefore, that these men were either migrants or return migrants, assuming a conventional definition that migrants are those intending to spend 12 months or more abroad.<sup>37</sup> But this terminology is not necessarily helpful. Although all migrations have shared aspects, in the most basic sense that all relate to some form of movement, beyond this a wealth of different facets and developments can colour the experience. Particularly pertinent for our study, focused on returnees, are the distinctions between migrants who expected to return to Britain and those who intended to remain abroad. Robert Bickers has defined the British economic presence in China as one split along these lines, although factors beyond transitory status are also involved, and categorised these distinct groups as expatriates and settlers.<sup>38</sup> When we look at the wider usage of these terms, however, it is clear that further scrutiny is needed to arrive at a definition that is workable for the purpose of this thesis.

Indeed, the term expatriate is one which has developed to hold multiple meanings, and has become a ‘malleable and unstable term’.<sup>39</sup> Traditionally, it was used to refer to those who were forced from their home country.<sup>40</sup> At its most foundational level in modern usage the term simply refers to ‘a person who lives outside their native country.’<sup>41</sup> One common usage in Britain today is to describe those who have retired to another country, with the term conjuring images of communities of British retirees in Spain. As recent commentary has emphasised, this is a misleading

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<sup>37</sup> Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.1.

<sup>38</sup> Robert Bickers, *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism 1900-1949* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.69-71.

<sup>39</sup> Sarah Kunz, ‘Privileged Mobilities: Locating the Expatriate in Migration Scholarship’, *Geography Compass*, 10, 3 (2016), p.90.

<sup>40</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of English, Third Edition* (Online Edition: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

conception, one driven, it appears, largely by the negative associations made with the term migrant.<sup>42</sup> These are not the people with whom this thesis deals, although they do share some characteristics with the expatriates who formed the CA, notably their lack of language knowledge (be it through a conscious decision, or simply a lack of effort) and subsequent failure to embrace the culture of their host country, with the latter a trait long recognised as the ‘legendary exclusivity of British expatriate society,’ though this, at least for retirees, seems to have little effect on the enjoyment they find at their new destination.<sup>43</sup>

Another prominent usage of the term—and one relevant to this study—is to describe migrants who venture abroad for economic or business reasons, to work. Yet while relevant, this too is a problematic classification. Many migrants are what we might call economic migrants, who travel to undertake a host of different jobs. Indeed, the Oxford English Dictionary defines a migrant in its most basic term as someone who has moved ‘to find work.’<sup>44</sup> Several factors are key in separating expatriates from this wider classification. First, more than other migrants it is their intention to only sojourn at their destination, before returning home to their native country. They make this decision prior to departure. This is linked intrinsically to a second factor that defines them: a relatively high socio-economic status. After all, in order to sojourn, they must hold a means of return. While some would have hoped to generate those means during their time abroad, this fact highlights that that expatriates, for the most part, are of this higher status, often employed by multinational firms, and are specialised professionals such as engineers, or involved in finance and mercantilism.<sup>45</sup> Inherent in these factors, too, is the greater mobility available to these expatriates, especially in comparison to other migrants. Some existing literature has

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<sup>42</sup> See for example Mawuna Remarque Koutonin, ‘Why are white people expats when the rest of us are immigrants?’, *Guardian*, 13 March 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/mar/13/white-people-expats-immigrants-migration> (last accessed 22 August 2017).

<sup>43</sup> James Whidden, ‘Expatriates in Cosmopolitan Egypt, 1864-1956’ in Robert Bickers (ed.), *Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series: Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp.61-2; Anthony M. Warnes, Russell King, Allan M. Williams and Guy Patterson ‘The Well-being of British expatriate retirees in Southern Europe’, *Ageing and Society*, 19, 6 (1999), p.725.

<sup>44</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of English, Third Edition*.

<sup>45</sup> John Darwin, ‘Orphans of Empire’ in R. Bickers (ed.), *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons Over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.335. For a more recent look at some of Hongkong’s Expatriate population, see A.M. Findlay, F.L.N. Li, A.J. Jowett and R. Skeldon ‘Skilled International Migration and the Global City: A Study of Expatriates in Hongkong’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 21, 1 (1996), pp.49-61.

conceptualised them as ‘hyper-mobile managerial elites holding key positions of power in the global economy’.<sup>46</sup> The resultant effects of this on the strength of links formed to the host nation is discussed below. It is perhaps worth noting here that those who intended to simply sojourn abroad in order to earn a substantial fund of money have alternately been termed as simply ‘sojourners’ or ‘plutocrats,’ again highlighting the problems with terminology that are extant.<sup>47</sup> In a strictly British context, it has even been noted that the term is used in combination with ‘colonial officer’ or ‘Imperial careerists’.<sup>48</sup> For this study, however, the term expatriate will be used.

The above factors helped define how expatriate life proceeded, both in China and elsewhere. The expatriates’ status as sojourners ensured that they, traditionally, held themselves consciously separate from the local population for fear of ‘going native’—although as we shall see, changes to this attitude would come to define the later expatriate experience in China.<sup>49</sup> But racial demarcation lines were by no means the only ones as expatriates, too, separated themselves, where possible, from the wider British migrant population for fear of damaging their reputation. Even marrying a British migrant of the wrong social class could damage career prospects for an aspiring expatriate hoping to climb the career ladder.<sup>50</sup> Demarcation even reached inside their own sphere, as expatriates were themselves separated to a point—the ‘Taipans’, or heads of firms, clustering at one end of the bar in the Shanghai Club, with the new recruits gathered at the other.<sup>51</sup> It was, ultimately, the expatriates’ relatively high employment status that ensured the possibility to enforce such separations. To this end they created a distinct social sphere in which they could exist; this sphere was characterized by the high levels of associationalism already noted.<sup>52</sup> High socio-economic status and sojourner lifestyle also brought with it a greater chance to attempt to influence British imperial and foreign policy from the metropole upon their return,

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<sup>46</sup> Kunz, ‘Privileged Mobilities’, p.92.

<sup>47</sup> Sojourners is perhaps the more common term of the two. Eric Richards uses the term ‘Plutocrats’ to describe those who intended to sojourn and make ‘their pile’ of money in Australia. See Eric Richards ‘Running home from Australia: intercontinental mobility and migrant expectations in the nineteenth century’ in Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The return movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p.84.

<sup>48</sup> Kunz, ‘Privileged Mobilities’, p.91.

<sup>49</sup> Whidden, ‘Expatriates in Cosmopolitan Egypt’, pp.61-2.

<sup>50</sup> Robert Bickers, ‘Shanghaianders and Others: British Communities in China, 1843-1957’ in Robert Bickers, (ed.), *Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series: Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.295.

<sup>51</sup> Nicholas R. Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire: Westerners in Shanghai and the Chinese Revolution of the 1920s* (New Hampshire: Middlebury College Press, 1991), p.71.

<sup>52</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, pp.174-9.

at least for those who remained in employment of the multi-national firms who had dispatched them overseas to begin with.<sup>53</sup> It was a combination of these factors that would see these men form together under the banner of the CA, and would see them come to dominate the committee of its London branch and headquarters. But the extension of the CA to East Asia with the development of a branch structure ensured that membership of the overall body became wider, opening opportunities for ‘settler’ interests to have their say.

These settlers are, perhaps, more straightforward to define, as their very name outlines the key aspect of their migration—that they settle in their new country of residence. This was the most common course of action for British migrants to locations around the Empire, and though numbers were vastly smaller, China was no exception.<sup>54</sup> But the term, much as that of expatriate, leaves room for divergent definitions. This is the case not least because it tends to conjure images of imperial frontiers, vast swathes of land, isolated farmsteads and ultimately the violent displacement of the indigenous population. But this was not so for China. Nor was the other potential settler experience—of existing and living under the host country’s jurisdiction—the reality that would meet settlers in Asia. Those who settled in China would have to adapt to a reality that was not entirely part of the British imperial world, but at the same time seemed as such.

This, for these British settlers, was a consequence of a combination of numerous institutions. On a diplomatic level, all British subjects held extraterritoriality until 1943. Prior to this date they were subject not to the laws of China, but to the jurisdiction of the British Supreme Court for China, based in Shanghai, the city which in itself became the second most prominent institution that represented the Chinese experience for British settlers. Through its Municipal Council, the role of which is discussed in more detail later, these settlers were granted the rights to own property, utilities, and gained the protection of a police force and small volunteer militia contingent. These types of institutions (alongside other British Municipal Councils and treaty port authorities) produced what came to feel like small enclaves of the

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<sup>53</sup> For a discussion of the influence multinational firms held over policy in China see P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, London: Routledge, 2013), pp.360-80 and pp.593-616.

<sup>54</sup> Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.306 notes that at most 40 per cent of migrants returned, the rest ending their lives outside of Britain. Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.67 notes their numerical dominance in China, and this work attempts to refine this and provide approximate figures in chapter one.



British Empire. Within them, life would proceed much as in any imperial frontier—with the caveat that it was largely limited to these locales, British business interests rarely progressing beyond them, and struggling to expand markets ‘up country’.<sup>55</sup> This was the treaty port world, in which these settlers would settle, and in which expatriates would sojourn.<sup>56</sup>

But who were these settlers? What lives did they lead before their move to China, and why did they choose this destination? Like expatriates, economic forces were often at play. But China did not offer the economic benefits that we more readily associate with settlers. There was no offer of land as was the case in imperial frontier locations such as the Canadian prairies.<sup>57</sup> Instead, there were jobs, most within Shanghai itself. There were small businesses to run as shop owners, or posts in administrative roles for the Shanghai Municipal Council. Employment in the municipal police was readily available and the body was often staffed by British army veterans, who left their regiments when these were dispatched to China. Others worked in lower level posts for expatriate-led firms. Many had not chosen China specifically, they had simply chosen a location that was part of a global job market in a global economy. When they arrived in China, they either found the lifestyle palatable enough to remain, or a return prohibitively expensive. These settlers were the people on whom much of the day-to-day work in the settlement rested. Those in Shanghai termed themselves ‘Shanghailanders’ and set about raising families in the treaty port enclaves where they found employment.<sup>58</sup> These were the British settlers in China. Lower class migrants, who moved for economic reasons, some of whom did not intend (or at least, had no guaranteed means) to return to Britain. They depended on extraterritoriality as granted by treaty and upon the Shanghai Municipal Council for their very existence, and, as we shall see, developed an identity that would staunchly defend these institutions.

It must be remembered, finally, that the British enclaves and institutions in China did not survive until the end of the time period covered by this thesis. Many of these settlers were evicted by circumstances beyond their control, and beyond their

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<sup>55</sup> Jürgen Osterhammel, ‘Britain in China, 1842-1914’ in Andrew Porter (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Vol. III The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.161

<sup>56</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.67-114 offers the best study of treaty ports and life in them.

<sup>57</sup> Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.16.

<sup>58</sup> For all of the above, see Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.69-75; Bickers, ‘Shanghailanders: The Formation and Identity of the British Settler Community in Shanghai’.

ability to defend themselves from—the Second Sino-Japanese War, and the rise of the People’s Republic of China [PRC]—leaving the CA to deal with a new group of returnees, unwilling ones, who had been forced back to their home country. Chapter four of the thesis explores the CA’s response to this.

The British business presence in China, not unlike individual migrants, also had to deal with particular problems inherently linked to the type of individual businesses, and their methods of operation. Many firms were tied, geographically, to a single location. They could not easily transfer their business from that location, especially if they relied on local trade networks, or were producing goods, and were therefore vulnerable to changes in the Chinese market.<sup>59</sup> These firms would become, like settler interests, defensive of proposed changes to extraterritoriality, and surface in this study most prominently in the CA’s Shanghai branch. They only appear, however, sporadically throughout the thesis, and little information is available regarding them—the only one to play any role of note in later discussion is the Shanghai-based manufacturer and importer Ilbert & Co.

Of much greater importance to this study are those firms who could place men actively in their employment on the CA’s London committees. Logistically, this meant the firms were required to have a London headquarters, or London office. For an import/export firm tied to a single location in China, this was, of course, a business structure that could be employed, and was a common structure found in British trade in Asia, with returnees founding ‘sister’ firms in Britain to do business with their Eastern counterparts.<sup>60</sup> However much more common within the CA’s upper echelons were representatives of businesses that had developed to become true ‘multinationals’. Trade itself was no longer their sole preserve, and many held interests that encompassed finance and shipping alongside import/export services. Attempting to rank these firms operating in China in terms of importance is, ultimately, not a task for this thesis, but a brief introduction to those that feature most prominently in this study is provided in Appendix B.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, p.45.

<sup>60</sup> Webster, ‘The Development of British Commercial and Political Networks in the Straits Settlements 1800 to 1868’, pp.917.

<sup>61</sup> Others have made some attempt to do so, grading these firms in numerous ways. Jardine Matheson, Swires and Dodwells are ranked by estimated size of capital employed in Geoffrey Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals, British Trading Companies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.54. The largest Far Eastern mercantile houses are ranked by group capital available for investment in Carol Matheson Connel, *A Business in Risk: Jardine Matheson and the Hongkong Trading Industry* (Westport: Praeger, 2004), p.31. Carrol Matheson Connel also

These are the firms that would lead the CA's political and commercial activities. Pre-1925, before British efforts to normalise diplomacy in China, they are sometimes referred to as 'concessionaires'—particularly the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation [HSBC] and Jardine Matheson—as they sought to develop railway or mining concessions granted to Britain via treaties, or sought to provide loans to the Chinese government to develop itself, whilst neglecting treaty port interests.<sup>62</sup> After 1925 their aims changed. Although loans to the Chinese government were still a primary interest they began to move consciously towards co-operation with Chinese partners seeking to ameliorate the damage the British presence caused by stirring Chinese nationalism, particularly spurred by a massacre of protestors by British led police in Shanghai in the same year.<sup>63</sup> This was done in concert with the British government, and saw the CA co-opted into the process to play a supporting role. They will be referred to predominantly throughout this thesis as multinationals, and it was partially this multinational structure that gave them the flexibility to adapt in line with British government policy towards China.

Overall, the British presence in China is, for this thesis, best defined in economic terms. On the one hand, big business 'multinational' interests dispatched expatriate employees, skilled professionals in their own fields, to sojourn in China and develop the respective company's presence there. If business patterns changed, these expatriates could be redeployed to another geographical location, and with them, the company's capital. On the other hand, individual settler migrants moved to China, hopeful of putting down roots and living a better life than that available in Britain. They founded small businesses and fostered an identity that was defensive of their extraterritorial rights, for without these, they faced losing their entire livelihoods. The

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reproduces shipping figures for the Yangtze river and group and partner capital for the pre-1914 period, see Carrol Matheson Connel, *The applicability of resource-based theory to the interpretation of strategic management in Jardine Matheson: uncertainty, relationships and capabilities* (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2001), p.70 and 88. None are conclusive, and often are little more than snapshots, but all attest that Jardine Matheson, the Swire Group, and Dodwells were leaders in the East Asian trade.

<sup>62</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands and the Foreign Office* (New York: Kings Crown Press, 1948), p.294. Many of the names used to refer to firms in this thesis are anachronistic, or have been simplified for use. The HSBC, for example, was generally known as the 'Hongkong Bank' until 1990, especially in Hongkong itself. For the HSBC naming conventions, see David Kynaston, *The Lion Wakes: A modern history of HSBC* (London: Profile Books, 2015), p.14. Other examples of simplification appear throughout the text. For a short history of the major firms who appear in the work, and their structures and naming conventions, see Appendix B.

<sup>63</sup> Hung-Ting Ku, 'Urban Mass Movement: The May Thirtieth Movement in Shanghai', *Modern Asian Studies*, 30, 2 (1979), pp.199-203. For a discussion of the wider impact of the massacre, see Bickers, *Britain in China*, chapter four.

two could, of course, see crossover. A particularly successful Shanghai settler could establish a successful business, and return to London to serve on the CA. Alternately, someone who intended to sojourn could see success and choose to settle.<sup>64</sup> Ultimately, as Bruce Elliot has eloquently noted ‘the certainty of non-return was only established by death.’<sup>65</sup> The potential of men who returned whilst maintaining a settler outlook to influence the CA is discussed in chapter two. But ultimately, this thesis explores an association that became, soon after its creation, one that may even be defined as a ‘returned expatriate’ rather than simply a return migrant association.

### **A question of sources**

That expatriates play a considerably greater role in this thesis than settlers is not simply due to their greater propensity to return to Britain. It is also because of the unfortunate fact that the branch records of the CA are not available, either destroyed or inaccessible, as many China based records are, or were perhaps never kept in any detail. This, unfortunately, means that much of daily work of the CA branches, interaction with consuls who formed the front line of communication between Britain and China as the ‘judges and governors’ of British subjects, for example, is lost. Lost too is much of the potential communication between the CA and the British minister in China, who they outlined at their formation as their second most desired point of political contact, but this is simply an unavoidable problem of source availability.<sup>66</sup> Beyond this, and as with any study, illustrative examples have been chosen from the available sources to offer case studies throughout the thesis, and it is to these sources we must next turn, to explain any further omissions; why certain areas and time periods have been prioritised; and, finally, how this study has been structured.

This thesis primarily draws upon the manuscript records of the CA itself. These are, naturally, the richest sources available to provide insight into the CA’s operations and activities. Focusing on them is also, however, an immediate reflection of the fact that the CA desired to avoid the public eye in many of its endeavours, and as a result

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<sup>64</sup> Richards, ‘Running home from Australia’, p.99 notes, for example, William Campbell, who became a ‘colonial half-millionaire’ in Australia and chose to stay having previously intended to sojourn in the country for at most ten years.

<sup>65</sup> Bruce S. Elliot, “‘Settling Down.’ masculinity, class and the rite of return in a transnational community’ in Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The return movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p.154.

<sup>66</sup> S.L. Endicott, *Diplomacy and Enterprise: British China Policy, 1933-1937* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1975), p.5.

available manuscript sources often provide the only route into the Association. These records are held at the School of Oriental and African Studies [SOAS], London, and comprise an extensive 143 files and volumes.<sup>67</sup> The files most referenced for the thesis are the minute books of the Association and its Annual Reports, although frequent reference is also made to files containing correspondence, circulars, and records of the Association's School of Chinese.

Of particular relevance, not least due to their significant scope, are the annual reports of the Association. A contemporary of the CA noted in 1894, only five years into the Association's life, that '[the] China Association [annual reports] are of quite an impossible size, resulting, I have no doubt, in large numbers ... going into the waste-paper basket.'<sup>68</sup> Despite this criticism, reports remained substantial. They grew from some 60 pages in that year to a maximum of 146 pages in 1911-12, when the report included a 16-page report on the CA's activities, 86 pages of correspondence and trade information, and finally a 44-page supplement containing a report of the AGM, annual dinner, details on the Association's School of Chinese, as well as a summary of the most important edicts issued in the previous year in China. The reason for this length was never outlined, though the role of secretary of the Association having been held by former journalists and authors provides perhaps one possible explanation.<sup>69</sup> Another, of course, may have been to help assure members that the Association was an active one, to which it was worth contributing their subscription fee.<sup>70</sup> Such may certainly have been a factor considering the CA drew subscriptions from a wide range of corporate members, and the length of the annual report may, too, have been to ensure they were kept well-informed about the wider state of the British trade with China. The reports eventually settled at a 50 to 100 page average, although this was significantly lower during the First World War, and towards the end of the period under consideration as British business retreated from China in the face of the rise of the PRC government. One notable change in publication occurred around 1908, when the CA began to reprint less confidential correspondence in the annual reports.

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<sup>67</sup> A catalogue of the files—which as of 2016 has been updated to include greater detail previously only available in the index at the SOAS library reading room—is available online at <http://archives.soas.ac.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=CHAS&pos=1> (last accessed 18 October 2017).

<sup>68</sup> "The Size of Pamphlets" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 24 December 1898, p.23.

<sup>69</sup> Two secretaries, Richard Simpson Gundry and Edward Manico Gull authored a number of works on China.

<sup>70</sup> Morris Davis, 'Some Neglected Aspects of British Pressure Groups', *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 7, 1 (1963), p.46 notes that this occurs within some voluntary groups.

Although the Association only made a final decision to stop quoting confidential information completely in 1930, this accounts for the availability of CA correspondence with government departments and others in some cases, and for its absence in others.<sup>71</sup> It must be noted here that to make this research possible a copy of these reports was used, rather than those which are publically available at SOAS. These copies were obtained from microform academic publishers, Wakefield, and comprise an entire set of reports from 1889-1968.<sup>72</sup> Readers will be directed to the appropriate SOAS files where annual reports are referenced, alongside the date of the specific report. The use of these copies, while the only practical route to examine them in their totality due to copy restrictions at SOAS, does bring with it one problem for anyone wishing to follow up references as the SOAS material is incomplete for some reports—SOAS certainly does not include a copy of the report for 1966-7, although this is only referenced to on two occasions in this thesis.

Of the other CA records, the minute books are the next most heavily used. These contain records of meetings until 1945, and from this date onwards, circulars of information sent to members in advance of committee meetings. These provide an immensely valuable resource because they offer a view into the inner workings of the Association, as well as some of the thoughts of its high ranking committee members. As is the case with all records of associations, these are sometimes lost in the technicalities of reports and minutes, but do come out in CA records at times. In fact, for the CA minutes are, in many ways, much more interesting—and certainly less sanitised—than the picture presented in the annual reports.

Remaining files include the CA's records of its School of Chinese; these were drawn upon heavily for the discussion of the School's establishment and purpose. An annual report for the school is also available as part of some CA annual reports. Alongside this, circulars and bulletins distributed to members have been used provide a fuller history of the CA, as they often cover areas in which the CA took an interest, but were not deemed important enough for mention in the annual reports, offer greater supplementary information, or insight into organisational particulars.

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<sup>71</sup> Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>72</sup> See <https://microform.digital/map/full-catalogue.php?browse=search&filter=&term=R96623&limit=all&value=&p=&ref=R96623> (last accessed 24 October 2017).

The CA collection at SOAS, it must be noted, continues to grow as the still extant CA continues to operate. More material was made available in 2016, including annual reports as recent as 2000, and the unpublished hand list offering guidance to the CA archive has, as of the same date, been migrated to the online catalogue of SOAS. Unfortunately, due to the chronological limits of the thesis and funding and time constraints, these have not been investigated, but it is clear that therein lies further potential for research. It is hoped that this thesis will go some way towards encouraging that. In particular, not least, because of the light it may well shed on significant watershed moments in Sino-British relations, such as the handover of Hongkong in 1997.

There are a number of inherent limitations to the records of the CA—an issue less specific to the CA itself, but rather the fact that it is an association. Concerns include issues of subjectivity and representativeness, as with any history of an association that focuses heavily on a selection of a groups of people, in this case returned expatriates—rather than the group as a whole. For the CA a mitigating factor is the relative smallness of the returning population from China. Another problem can be the occasional inward-looking nature of associations, and what this can mean for qualitative records. As noted above, for example, associations that seek funding from their members—as the CA did—have been noted, on occasion, to overstate their achievements and activity in annual reports to present a positive image to these funders. This is, of course, alleviated somewhat by the investigation of the private papers of the CA. But these, too, have limitations: they often are one-way records, and hence do not always permit consideration of exchanges and discussions in their fullest.

The limitations noted above underscore why it is so important not to view the records of an association in isolation. Alongside the CA's archive, other collections have thus been used where possible to fill gaps, to provide divergent and diverse perspectives, and to offer greater depth. The CA collection itself, for example, has no copy of the Association's original rules and regulations. These were instead drawn from a draft copy retained in the papers of longstanding chairman and founder William Keswick, held in the Jardine Matheson Archives at Cambridge University. Insight into the inner workings and occasional struggles behind the scenes of the Association, naturally not included in the Association's official publication, has also been explored further through private papers of members, including those of longstanding secretary and president R.S. Gundry, committee member J.O.P. Bland, and HSBC head Charles

Stewart Addis.<sup>73</sup> The understanding of the relationship of the CA with some of its corporate members has been supplemented through the investigation of the correspondence retained by the Swire Group with the Association.

More difficult is the question of how to assess the relationship of the CA with the British government, and its departments and representatives. In some cases, these relationships are evidenced through the papers of the CA, for example when they were presented with confidential information, allowed input into government plans, or even praised directly by government representatives at social functions. Unfortunately, Foreign Office documents which could shed light on this matter from a government perspective are either largely disappointing, or not yet catalogued in sufficient detail to locate those relevant to the CA within the scope of the research time available for this study. A search using the National Archives 'Discovery' search engine for "China Association", for example, only produces 95 results, of which the overwhelming majority are simply copies, often of correspondence or bulletins containing information remitted from East Asia, sent to the Foreign Office by the CA. A substantial further amount relate to unlinked East India and China Associations of an earlier date. Less than five are of substantial interest, and have been consulted for what information they hold.<sup>74</sup> The most prudent action in the face of the lack of such information is to largely withhold conclusions upon the success of the CA's lobbying of government, instead focusing on the methods the CA used and the relationships and networks they created.

A further notable omission from the CA collection, as previously mentioned, are any large collections of papers from the Association's various Far Eastern branches. Indeed, all that are available are committee papers from Hongkong for the 1961 to 1973 period, and papers of the linked British Residents' Association of Shanghai from 1947 to 1952. The Hongkong papers are beyond the chronological limits of this thesis, and the British Residents' Association papers comprise only a single file. The practical considerations of this, combined with the original intention to focus upon returnees rather than those still in China, is that the branches of the

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<sup>73</sup> Gundry's roles and those of J.O.P. Bland have been drawn from the CA's annual reports. Addis was a CA member, however he rejected a 1914 invitation to serve on the committee as 'the demands upon my time are already so great.' See Circular to the General Committee, no.186, 17 December 1914, Circulars Vol. XII, 185-200, November 1914 – January 1915, CHAS/MCP/20 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>74</sup> See <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> (last accessed 14 September 2018).



Association are only considered from a limited perspective, for example when they had occasion to request something of, or came in sustained contact with, the London headquarters. Efforts to ascertain the views of the branches at key occasions have, of course, been made, either through the use of above mentioned personal papers, or contemporary newspapers, most prominently *The North China Herald*.

Despite conscious efforts by the CA to not court public attention, it was inevitable that their undertakings were to appear in public sources from time to time. Alongside *The North China Herald* a number of other newspapers and periodicals have been investigated, located throughout Britain and in a few cases, East Asia. Many of these sources are available predominantly for the nineteenth century, and as such are used most when referring to the Association's earliest activities. These newspapers are grouped together under a number of subscription collections this thesis could draw on. Of particular importance are those available via Gale online primary sources, which provides online access to the British Library newspapers collection, nineteenth century periodicals collection, and *The Times* Online archive.<sup>75</sup> To begin with, a general exact phrase search for the "China Association" was undertaken. Further details extracted from this search, and based on pointers unearthed in the material, were then used to search for individuals and occurrences of particular importance. This most general search of these archives produced 732 results within the timeframe of the study. Both *The Guardian* and *The Observer* were searched in the same way, through the ProQuest Historical Newspapers collection, but produced only few results. Additional material, usually in connection with specific cases or individuals, was found in both these collections and other global newspaper collections digitised by the national libraries of Singapore, New Zealand and Australia. It is notable that with the CA based in London, and due to the circles in which its members operated, that of the newspapers examined, *The Times* proved the most useful for this study.

Finally, a collection of China and Singapore directories, almanacs, Hong lists and land renter lists are used in chapter two to build a picture of the employment background of the original membership of the CA. Many of these were records sourced online, and an increasing number continue to be made available through online repositories that will offer future scholars even further scope for detailed

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<sup>75</sup> See <http://gdc.galegroup.com/gdc/artemis/whatsInside> (last accessed 27 October 2017).

study.<sup>76</sup> These directories are an invaluable resource for tracking individuals throughout their career in East Asia.

### **Scope, methods, and structure**

It is these sources that ultimately do much to define the scope of this thesis. But while that is the case the first question to pose is within what framework they are best analysed. In the absence of an established immediate field of study—that of a British return expatriate association—within which to situate this work, the closest guide to look to is that of associational culture. As we have seen, however, within that are various subfields. Is the CA likely to most closely resemble an ethnic society? A trade association? A chamber of commerce? A simple dining club? In the absence of a ready answer, this study was therefore, from its inception, one which was intended to be defined in scope by the activities of the CA itself, producing the most representative overview possible of their major aims and activities.

But the thesis, too, has its scope defined by the wider history of British involvement in China, Sino-British relations, and worldwide events. Although annual reports and some documents are available until a later date, 1955 was chosen as the end date to enable a longitudinal perspective while keeping the thesis manageable and within established political periodizations. This ensures a substantial five-year period in which to study the CA and its members' reactions to the rise of the PRC, and the troubles they faced because of this. Particular attention is also given throughout the thesis to the key date of 30 May 1925. When, on that day, the Shanghai Municipal Police opened fire upon, and killed, a number of Chinese protestors, British interests in China underwent a period of upheaval leading to what was termed the 'Sino-British Rapprochement.'<sup>77</sup> This served as a major turning point, too, for the CA as it strove to re-align itself to fit this new government policy. International wars and famines were the events most responsible for the CA's charitable efforts, although efforts have been made to ensure efforts linked to individuals and less well known collections are all included and compared in the thesis. It is perhaps worthy of note here that, for the CA,

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<sup>76</sup> A consistently updated list can be found as part of the University of Bristol Chinese Maritime Customs project, available online at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/history/customs/ancestors/directories.html> (last accessed 29 October 2018). For Singapore see the national library of Singapore, available online at <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/printheritage> (last accessed 29 October 2018).

<sup>77</sup> Edmund S.K. Fung, 'The Sino-British Rapprochement, 1927-31' *Modern Asian Studies*, 17, 1 (1983), pp.79-105. For the event itself, and the immediate reaction in Shanghai see Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, specifically chapters five through nine.

revolution and civil war in China were rarely on the agenda, beyond their local effects. Their interests were mostly confined to the British treaty ports and it was upon these areas that they focused, rather than large scale events over which they could not hope to wield influence. Indeed, although British investment in China represented the greatest percentage of foreign investment in the country it remained, throughout the period under study, largely confined to treaty port enclaves, other than a few of the more enterprising firms such as British American Tobacco [BAT], Asiatic Petroleum and Standard Oil.<sup>78</sup> It is apt here to note, too, that the CA did concern itself with political matters relating to Japan, and remained open as a social meeting point to men who had returned from the wider Far East. With a wealth of material available to produce this thesis, however, a decision was taken to focus almost completely on their efforts related to China, both to present the greatest possible depth in that area, and to keep a clear narrative.

In terms of structure, the thesis has been separated into four further chapters. The first will comprise a literature review, looking in greater detail at some of the issues raised in this introduction, key historiographical themes, and also a more detailed exploration of the British presence in China and how it operated, and how residents lived. Greater attention will be paid, too, to the operations and structures of voluntary associations, outlining the key types and structures that the CA may have drawn inspiration from, and acted in a similar fashion to.

The second chapter investigates the original membership of the CA, drawing together a range of sources to appraise the first 111 members of the Association as well as the Association's structure. A brief employment history has been produced for all of the founding members for whom it was possible to do so (over 95 per cent) investigating which company (or companies) they worked for in China, their career progression, their locations of employment, the time they spent in China, and whether they remained active in the China trade on their return. This allows us to draw important conclusions on which firms and businesses held influence over the direction of the CA, which is reinforced by investigations into the original committees of the CA and the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the CA over a 65-year period. Those who

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<sup>78</sup> As much as 86 percent of British investment in China was confined to the two locales of Shanghai and Hongkong alone, as of 1929, with the remaining 14 percent split between other treaty ports and the rest of China. See Chi-Ming Hou, *The Evolution of International Business 1800-1945 Volume VIII: Foreign Investment and Economic Development in China, 1840-1937* (London and New York: Routledge, 1965, reprinted 2000), pp.17-18. See also Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, p.44.

were excluded from membership of the CA will also be investigated, in order to appraise the CA against the typical norms of membership for voluntary associations in this period. A final survey considers the branch structure of the CA and its uses, before exploring the question whether branches representative of ‘settler’ interests could really hold any influence over the London committee, and whether this committee was, ultimately, an oligarchy that really represented only a few firms while presenting itself as the representative voice of, at its zenith, over 1,000 members.

This analysis of the Association’s structure and membership paves the way for the following two chapters, which are defined largely in relation to the aims and objects of the Association. These main objects saw the CA rest on three foundational pillars—two of these are investigated in chapter three: first that it was to provide a social space for returnees to meet and second that it was to provide a political voice for the commercial community in East Asia. Focus on these aims enables examination, firstly, of the social function of the CA, and the role it played in alleviating a ‘difficult return’ for members by establishing platforms of sociability. Secondly, the chapter then explores how these two disparate aims in fact became interlinked to a large extent, and how social gatherings were given a political purpose with something akin to public diplomacy being undertaken. How these gatherings changed over time to ensure they fit a wider British government led effort of building social relations with prominent Chinese will also be examined. Finally, the chapter focuses on some of the more traditional political undertakings of the CA, examining how it acted to build contacts within British government departments to attempt to allow it an input into the direction of British policy. Although ascertaining the overall success of the CA is beyond this work this examination will nonetheless show how the CA and other insider interests were at least included in policy discussion, and afforded the opportunity to provide feedback on matters affecting the commercial environment. It will further demonstrate how they later realigned themselves in the period after 1925 to support the government’s positions in order to retain this important channel of communication. Day to day undertakings of the CA, such as contacting the Foreign Office and other government departments to discuss small matters of commercial importance are largely absent from the study. This is partially due to constraints on the size of this work and the frequency with which this occurred, but also reflective of the fact that earlier work by Pelcovits does so in considerable detail.

Chapter four then considers the third of the CA's foundational aims: to collect for, and dispense, charity in any way the Association's committee saw fit. Investigation of a series of individual appeals will outline the mechanisms behind the Association's charity, before a series of wider appeals linked to famine in China and both the First and Second World Wars are considered, followed by appeals linked to educational schemes. Alongside all of these schemes, ideas of strategic corporate philanthropy are explored, as much of the financial backing was drawn from the member firms of the CA. Finally, an educational scheme that the CA facilitated with a view to teach the Chinese language in London for commercial recruits before their departure to China is examined, exploring the motivations behind it, whether it was successful, and to show how it would later play a key role in the foundation of SOAS, London.

Ultimately, this study has a number of central aims. At the most basic level it offers a history of the CA, providing an overview of the operation of a returned expatriate association, in order to contribute to the growing bodies of in the fields of both associational culture and return migration. By utilising the nexus point of the CA, the thesis offers a novel method for identifying a substantial group of return migrants, often difficult to locate, and investigate to what extent they retained links to their host country following their return to Britain. In doing so, the thesis will also shed new light on the networks that underpinned British links to China in the period under consideration, and investigate how they operated, through the organisational structure of the CA, to undertake aims as disparate as applying political pressure and providing for sociability, charity and benevolence, and education. It will further demonstrate that although the CA developed into a wide-ranging Association it was the influence of specific business interests, and their representatives who remained actively linked to China, that would underpin these wider activities and ensure that they promoted, in almost all cases, the British economic presence in China.

# CHAPTER 1

## A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

When the American Asiatic Association was established in 1898 to promote trade and represent commercial interests of US citizens in Asia, it did not fail to make reference to what inspired its inception: the British China Association. For they believed the CA had ‘proved itself a power in all matters effecting the commercial relations of England in the Far East,’ thereby showing the importance of watching over interests, building networks and lobbying for interests of the mercantile community. This was the case not least because of the ‘intimate and mutually advantageous’ connection between the CA and the British Foreign Office.<sup>1</sup> Yet while thus recognised for its important role by contemporaries following its establishment in 1889, growing to over 1,000 members at its zenith, and boasting branches in different cities in Asia, the CA has received little scholarly interest. The only available substantial study of the group, Nathan Albert Pelcovits’ work *Old China Hands and the Foreign Office*, was completed in 1948. Although Pelcovits’ study is immensely detailed in exploring the day to day small scale political efforts of the Association, it ultimately presents a limited view of the CA, both temporally and in respect of its aims, objects, and overall reach and development.<sup>2</sup>

Building on Pelcovits’ work, this thesis seeks to offer a novel way of thinking about the CA, reconciling some of its seemingly disparate aims in order to present a comprehensive examination of the Association. In order to do so, however, it is of great importance to first review the broader range of existing work concerned with related subjects. This review will take the form of four sections, and will also clarify definitions and historical frameworks which will be referenced later in this study. First, the overarching themes of British policy in China will be investigated through the lens of metropole and periphery interests and their development over time. This connects directly to the second section, which expands on the initial definitions relating to the British presence in China, examining in more detail the scholarship on firms and

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<sup>1</sup> Quotes from American Asiatic Association, *Constitution, History, List of Members* (New York: 1898), p.20.

<sup>2</sup> The CA appear briefly in a number of China related works otherwise. Other than Pelcovits, the most notable are a series of references to their undertakings in the 1922-27 period in Phoebe Chow, *British Opinion and Policy towards China, 1922-1927* (unpublished PhD Thesis, The London School of Economic and Political Science, 2011).

individuals. Following this, the review will consider the global development and proliferation of associational culture—of which the CA became part—in order to understand in which ways the CA might fit into this wider matrix of associations. Finally, it is also critical to understand the CA's role as a pressure / interest group, and to clarify what mechanisms and avenues were available to the CA with which it could aim to impart political pressure. In combination, these four sections will provide the background against which the remainder of the thesis is positioned.

### **Britain in China: Metropole and periphery interests and their development**

While the scope of this study is defined by the CA's period of operation and availability of source material, its history must be placed in the wider context of British involvement in China. A longitudinal contextualisation, from the time of the East India Company monopoly to 1955, the end of the period under consideration, is important to set the scene for the CA's establishment and shed light on wider political developments that encouraged its foundation and development. In particular, this section looks at British policy towards China in four phases: policy before the founding of the CA; policy during the early years of the CA's existence; policy after 1925 in the face of growing Chinese nationalism; and finally policy following the upheaval of the Sino-Japanese and Second World War.

It was during the first of these phases that the China trade was of greatest importance to Britain as a whole. By the late eighteenth century some 20 to 25 million pounds of tea were imported from China per annum, and through levies placed on the East India Company, which held a monopoly over trade with China, this came to provide between six and seven per cent of the total revenue of the British government.<sup>3</sup> Other figures suggest an even greater importance by the 1830's, with around ten per cent of government revenues the result of the tea trade, or £3.3 million per annum.<sup>4</sup> Though profitable, problems arose as British merchants found the Chinese unwilling to import British goods at the level the British had hoped to export, and further insisted

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<sup>3</sup> P.J. Marshall, 'Britain Without America – A Second Empire?' in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume II, The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.582.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-1842* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), p.3.

upon payment in silver for tea, thereby causing a major drain on British reserves.<sup>5</sup> British embassies sent under Lord Macartney and Lord Amherst to negotiate the opening of China to further British trade both ended in failure, gaining no concessions from the imperial Chinese government as it preferred to retain the greatest distance possible from the British, whom they viewed as barbarians.<sup>6</sup> A solution—albeit one with tragic consequences—was eventually found in the importation of opium to China. Smuggled into China, opium from India was sold illegally, and British silver stocks were recovered.<sup>7</sup> This enabled the trade to settle into a rhythm largely agreeable to British government interests.<sup>8</sup> But the price of this for the Chinese Empire this was high: the growing popularity of opium resulted in a significant deficit, as much as \$38 million between 1828 and 1836.<sup>9</sup> Longer term the wider consequences of increased opium consumption would bring with it, too, a huge human cost.<sup>10</sup>

Although the balance of payments was now agreeable to the British government, British traders were far from happy at China's continued isolation, which saw trading of other goods restricted in volume, and in location to Canton.<sup>11</sup> The British idea of 'world bettering', importing free trade ideals—and as a result improving British economic prospects—could hardly claim to have been achieved with China largely retaining its isolationist trade stance.<sup>12</sup> Despite this, British leaders remained pragmatic. The income generated from the opium trade was too large to risk and through the 1830s the preferred British government policy was one of peaceful negotiation.<sup>13</sup> This position was compounded because India, as the producer of the

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<sup>5</sup> Frederick Wakeman Jr., 'The Canton Trade and the Opium War' in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China Volume 10: Late Ch'ing 1800-1911, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp.161-173.

<sup>6</sup> See Marshall, 'Britain Without America – A Second Empire?', p.582; Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, p.21.

<sup>7</sup> See Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War, 1840-1842: Barbarians in the Celestial Empire in the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century and the War by Which They Forced Her Gates Ajar* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), pp.41-64, or Harry G. Gelber, *Opium, Soldiers and Evangelicals: England's 1840-42 War with China and its Aftermath* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.36.

<sup>8</sup> Marshall, 'Britain Without America – A Second Empire?', p.582.

<sup>9</sup> Frederick Wakeman Jr., 'The Canton Trade and the Opium War', p.173.

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed collection of essays on the later history of the drug in China see Timothy Brook and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (eds.), *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

<sup>11</sup> Frederick Wakeman Jr., 'The Canton Trade and the Opium War', p.173.

<sup>12</sup> Martin Lynn, 'British Policy, Trade and Informal Empire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century' in Andrew Porter (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol III: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.110.

<sup>13</sup> Glenn Melancon, 'Peaceful Intentions: The First British Trade Commission in China, 1833-5', *Historical Research*, 73, 180 (2000), pp.33-47.



drug, had come to depend greatly on the profitability of the opium trade. With much of India's purchasing power for British-made goods, therefore, reliant upon the China trade and, by extension, opium, little was to be gained and much was to be lost by tampering with the status quo.<sup>14</sup>

1833, however, had provided an opportunity for those far away from London and government control to take matters into their own hands. With the government depriving the East India Company of its remaining trade monopoly with China, British interests in China quickly displayed, even at this early date, the independence from the British metropole that would come to be a central characteristic of the British presence in China.<sup>15</sup> Lord Napier, essentially now in control of the British trade with his new role of superintendent replacing the old hierarchies imposed by the East India Company, came to believe the whole of China could be opened to trade by a single show of British force.<sup>16</sup> Napier sailed to Canton in a British warship and attempted to engage in direct negotiations over trade with the Chinese authorities, accusing the Chinese official there of 'ignorance and incompetence'.<sup>17</sup> The Viceroy responded by simply closing all trade, and refused to allow Napier to leave. Napier called for two British frigates to break the imposed blockade, but their efforts met with failure. Napier was only allowed to leave with Chinese permission, only granted once he had ordered the British warships to withdraw. Taken ill with stress, he died, however, soon after his arrival at Macao. Thus ended the event that would come to be known as the 'Napier Fizzle'.<sup>18</sup> Although some voices from Canton called for war in retaliation this was not to be as other voices proved moderating. Palmerston remained of his previous opinion, and, in any case, China continued to occupy 'surprisingly little space' in his correspondence.<sup>19</sup>

The state of the trade was not to remain static for long, however, thanks to a Chinese official similarly overzealous to Napier. Increasingly unhappy with both the economic and social damage of the opium trade, the Chinese Empire made efforts to halt it. Commissioner Lin was sent to Canton, and chose to simply destroy the British

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<sup>14</sup> See Ward Fay, *The Opium War, 1840-1842*, pp.53-64, or Gelber, *Opium, Soldiers and Evangelicals*, pp.36-7.

<sup>15</sup> See for instance H.V. Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.258.

<sup>16</sup> Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, pp.45-8.

<sup>17</sup> Gao Hao, 'Prelude to the Opium War? British reactions to the 'Napier Fizzle' and attitudes towards China in the mid eighteenth-thirties' *Historical Research*, 87, 237 (2014), p.494.

<sup>18</sup> Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, pp.45-8.

<sup>19</sup> Hao, 'Prelude to the Opium War?'; Gelber, *Opium, Soldiers and Evangelicals*, p.28.

opium stocks, valued at around £2m (worth £135m at 2009 prices).<sup>20</sup> British private enterprise was outraged, sought war, and was ultimately successful. Government opinion was influenced by returnees—discussed later—who had experienced the Napier fizzle and the First Opium War was fought from 1839 to 1842.<sup>21</sup> Palmerston noted after the conflict, in 1845, that ‘a greater benefit to British manufacturers could hardly be conceived’ than the gains that were made on the back of the peace treaty signed to end the War, the Treaty of Nanking, in 1842.<sup>22</sup> The treaty, which included the opening of five treaty ports, while also granting extraterritoriality and other benefits for British subjects in China, was certainly a critical watershed in terms of the expansion of the British presence in China.<sup>23</sup>

Further gains and concessions followed the Second Opium War (1856-60). British trade with China grew considerably, both in terms of imports and exports, with new areas of the Yangtze opened to British interests.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, from the middle of the nineteenth century, China began to engage to a greater level with the western powers.<sup>25</sup> China accepted, following its defeat in the Second Opium War, that it could not simply exclude foreigners, and a process of modernizing relations and institutions to ensure the survival of the Qing dynasty began. This included the foundation of the Zongli Yamen (a ‘proto-foreign office’), engagement with international law, imperial audiences for foreign diplomats (without the need to kowtow) and diplomatic missions abroad, all by 1876.<sup>26</sup>

Regardless, this left much to be achieved in the next period under consideration, from the foundation of the CA to 1925. In the late 1880s, when the CA was established, much of China still remained closed to British enterprise, with investment and British residents constrained to treaty ports and Hongkong. British merchants and businesses were quick to remind all who would listen of this. It was as

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<sup>20</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.77-8.

<sup>21</sup> Alain Le Pichon, (ed.), *China Trade and Empire: Jardine, Matheson & Co. and the Origins of British Rule in Hong Kong 1827-1843* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp.42-46.

<sup>22</sup> Lynn, ‘British Policy, Trade and Informal Empire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century’, p.111.

<sup>23</sup> For a more detailed overview of the terms of the treaty which followed the war see Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, p.84.

<sup>24</sup> J.Y. Wong, *Deadly Dreams: Opium, Imperialism and the Arrow War (1856-1860) in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.434-54.

<sup>25</sup> For the history of the Second Opium War, or ‘Arrow’ War, see Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, pp.133-154. For the gains of the treaty, see specifically pp.151-2.

<sup>26</sup> Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, ‘Late Ch’ing foreign relations, 1866-1905’ in J.K. Fairbank and Kwang-Ching Liu (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China Volume 11: Late Ch’ing, 1800-1911, Part 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp.70-1. See also Jennifer Rudolph, *Negotiated Power in Late Imperial China: The Zongli Yamen and the Politics of Reform* (New York: Ithaca, 2008), pp.54-61.

a result of this that early CA aims, discussed by Pelcovits, and so largely not revisited in this thesis, focused on opening waterways that remained closed to British steamships; sought to alter the Chinese position that railway development was prohibited; and lobbied to expand trade inland where it continued to be severely restricted or banned altogether, even to the point of pressing for the establishment a British ‘protectorate’ in the Yangtze region.<sup>27</sup> The key event in this period, against which these aims were set, was the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-5). Following a Japanese victory, a ‘scramble for China’ began, in which competing foreign powers strove to gain concessions. Not all of these aims mentioned above were realistic, however, particularly those which hoped for territorial gains. Overall, the British government’s official response was characterised by efforts to provide finance to China in order to maintain the integrity of the country alongside maintaining British predominance in the China market by peaceful means.<sup>28</sup>

Cain and Hopkins’ ‘gentlemanly capitalism’ argument posits that key in achieving this was an alliance between the British government and financial and service interests that drove imperial policy—including that in China—from the metropole.<sup>29</sup> In this period to 1925 both Cain and Hopkins and E.W. Edwards have shown that by providing large loans through the HSBC the British government sought to both capitalise upon, whilst simultaneously ensuring the stability of, the weak Chinese state following the Sino-Japanese War.<sup>30</sup> Although the Qing dynasty fell in 1911, this did not mean the end of the Chinese state, or this policy, and further financial backing was made to the provisional government under Yuan Shikai, alongside which agreement saw the management of Chinese Customs revenue placed under an international consortium to guarantee loan repayments.<sup>31</sup>

Providing finance also brought with it other potential sources of revenue. As China sought extra revenue to secure these loans, a range of concessions was given out to foreign nations, to develop railways, or to undertake mining. Large British-led multinationals with involvement in China—such as Jardine Matheson—were co-opted into this wider metropole based alliance of the British government and the HSBC to

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<sup>27</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*.

<sup>28</sup> Hsu, ‘Late Ch’ing foreign relations, 1866-1905’, p.71.

<sup>29</sup> Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*, pp.360-80 and pp.593-616.

<sup>30</sup> E.W. Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China: 1895 – 1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>31</sup> Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*, pp.375-6.

provide their expertise.<sup>32</sup> In times when British influence waned, international co-operation and consortiums were sought through which to provide investment in China, again led by the HSBC, a method which proved successful until the First World War.<sup>33</sup> In all cases, the main aim was to protect the integrity of Britain's major creditor, the Chinese government. More aggressive schemes to improve trade—including the suggestion of a British controlled territory, a 'Yangtze Protectorate', in which manufacturers could operate—would not be pursued for fear of undermining China's territorial sovereignty.<sup>34</sup>

While this was the policy Britain pursued from the metropole, it does not present a full picture. A second perspective, and one which does not preclude Cain and Hopkins' work, is that of a settler dominated 'informal empire' shaping British actions in China. Robert Bickers has argued convincingly that, with China located at the periphery of Empire and never formal imperial territory, the British government had actually lost control of many of the British subjects there. As such, the government left them to their own devices and simply ignored calls for unrealistic expansion, only altering this position and imposing effective control over British interests in China after 1925.<sup>35</sup> What we see here was settler control, and it began with the foundation of a British settlement in Shanghai following the Opium War of 1842.<sup>36</sup> Further impetus was gained in 1854, when, in response to the threat of the Taiping rebellion outside of the city, and the threat of a growing number of unruly inhabitants within it, British residents in Shanghai formed the Shanghai Municipal Council, the Shanghai Volunteer Contingent and the Shanghai Municipal Police to defend their interests.<sup>37</sup> With the end of the threat, and the withdrawal of troops, the Shanghai Municipal Council became the primary vehicle for the implementation of settler policy, as its reach and the populace resident underneath it continued to grow.<sup>38</sup> With it came its own rule of law, supported by the ever-growing Shanghai Municipal Police Force, its ranks bolstered by marines who chose to settle following participation in various conflicts in China.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.371.

<sup>33</sup> Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*, pp.375-7; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.114-175.

<sup>34</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, pp.220-262.

<sup>35</sup> This theory is drawn from Bickers, *Britain in China*.

<sup>36</sup> Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, p.95.

<sup>37</sup> Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, pp.126-133; Isabella Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp.3-4.

<sup>38</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.123-31.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.75.

With the Foreign Office focused upon its own metropole-based methods of providing finance, it allowed, through its own inactivity, the drift of control to the periphery where power was not simply in the hands of expatriates and big business, but rather the result was a ‘private enterprise empire’, with power held by settlers in control of property and land, and with its influence over bodies formed to manage settlements built on the basis of concessions, including the Shanghai Municipal Council.<sup>40</sup>

Ultimately, these metropole and periphery aims existed concurrently. Metropole policy was dictated by the British government, in concurrence with large financial interests such as HSBC and large British firms, such as Jardine Matheson.<sup>41</sup> They sought to profit from lending credit to China, and aimed to ensure China’s stability to repay it. Periphery policy, shaped and led by settler interests and the Shanghai Municipal Council, was expansionist and sought to create an area in which British manufacturing might develop and small import/export firms could flourish. The two existed alongside one another for some time, though often uneasily. This was the world into which the CA was born. It would be forced—as a representative body of the British presence in China—to consider and represent the needs of both of these groups, certainly in its early life. But the two were often difficult to reconcile and were prone to clash in this period, including a major dispute within the CA in 1905, which saw a struggle for control over the body to decide whether it would represent the interests of the Metropole, Periphery, or both. Such metropole—periphery disputes were not confined to China, of course. South Africa, for example, saw the competing aims of the Colonial Office, who hoped to expend minimal outlay to produce order there and the wider scope of settler aims come into conflict. Unlike in China, however, these differing perspectives never ‘worked from irreconcilably different positions.’<sup>42</sup> It is to this fracturing of the relations between metropole and periphery interests in China that we must now turn.

The next period of British government policy towards China was defined by two events: those of 30 May 1925 and of the beginning of the Chinese Civil War in 1927. The events of 30 May 1925 saw a protesting Chinese crowd fired upon by

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp.3-6 and pp.220-1.

<sup>41</sup> For clarity, the name Jardine Matheson is used here, and throughout, to refer to the wider Jardine Matheson Group. Matheson & Co. were in fact the British end of the business, with Jardine Matheson operating in East Asia, although both were indistinguishable from one another in terms of partners, and therefore operation, by the early twentieth century. See appendix B for further detail.

<sup>42</sup> Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth Century South Africa and Britain*, pp.4-5.

Shanghai Municipal Police, causing a number of deaths.<sup>43</sup> In response the Chinese population in Shanghai called a general strike, and by 10 June some 130,000 workers had withdrawn their labour, closing some 107 foreign owned factories.<sup>44</sup> Although the strike was an inconvenience, it was of little importance compared to the impetus granted to the wider growth of Chinese nationalism and boycotts of foreign goods that followed, both immediately in 1925, and later in 1928, 1931 and beyond.<sup>45</sup> This forced Metropole interests to finally make an effort to reign in settler power that had developed in Shanghai and that was increasingly coming into conflict with developing Chinese nationalism. To help achieve control over settler power, the British government undertook a wide ranging effort to normalise diplomatic relations with China. This involved reforming its own diplomatic corps and restricting the power of settlers and the Shanghai Municipal Council. Alongside this an alliance was formed between the British government and several major multinational firms, including Swires and Jardine Matheson. Concurrent with British government efforts, these firms were to begin building consciously equal relationships with Chinese business partners. It was hoped the invitation of these men into British social circles, as well as other moves, such as improvement of Chinese language skills and the removal of Pidgin English as a means of communication, would stress equality between British and Chinese.<sup>46</sup> Other relations were also to be normalised too. BAT, for instance, had always paid a substantial taxes in China, often beyond its requirement and when the national government increased taxes further, BAT acquiesced. By 1935 the firm was the single largest tax payer in China and found its payments rewarded when it was granted freedom to operate outside of treaty port confines by the Chinese government.<sup>47</sup> The Anglo-Dutch firm Unilever, too, moved from efforts to avoid taxation to paying its fair share by 1936, by which point it was even considering paying extra taxes voluntarily.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Ku, 'Urban Mass Movement: The May Thirtieth Movement in Shanghai' pp.199-203.

<sup>44</sup> Harumi Goto-Shibata, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai, 1925-31* (London: MacMillan Press, 1995), p.15.

<sup>45</sup> For the Boycott and a wider history of Chinese Boycotts of foreign goods see Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), Chapters three and four. See also Goto-Shibata, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai, 1925-31*, pp. 15-18.

<sup>46</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.117-20, pp.131-6 and pp.179-212.

<sup>47</sup> Jürgen Osterhammel, 'Imperialism in Transition: British Business and the Chinese Authorities, 1931-37', *The China Quarterly*, 98 (1984), pp.282-3.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Van der Putten, *Corporate Behaviour and Political Risk: Dutch Companies in China, 1903-1941* (unpublished PhD Thesis, Leiden University, 2001), p.241.

On a wider stage, the Civil War saw the British government back the Nationalist government in the South of China, in the hope of turning them away from Bolshevism, with the control of tariff autonomy returned to the Chinese Nationalist government from Foreign control to help improve relations and increase the power of the Nationalist government.<sup>49</sup> Further credit was extended to the Chinese Nationalists, and the British Foreign Office and HSBC even undertook to reorganise the Chinese currency in the 1930s, hoping to draw it into the new ‘sterling area’ established when Britain left the Gold Standard, a plan heavily influenced by CA member Charles Stewart Addis.<sup>50</sup> By the 1930s, many British businessmen and merchants considered trade prospects to be good. While it is worth noting that, for example, importers of Manchester piece goods had struggled as a result of the return of tariff autonomy to China, larger firms who had engaged in co-operation with Chinese interests found this proving beneficial.<sup>51</sup> Ultimately, it was hoped that moves such as these would pave the way for British interests to exist without the protection they were currently afforded by, and allow for the surrender of, extraterritoriality and the ‘unequal treaties’ won through earlier conflict. The CA, as we shall see, had a role to play in these wider changes.

The final aspect of government policy relevant to the study of the CA is the major change that occurred in the run up to, and following, the Second World War. The British presence in China, by 1937, was in a poor state. Metropole policy made efforts to help China through the Second Sino-Japanese war (1937-45), but financial backing was no longer as substantial as it had once been due to Britain’s own costs of re-armament programmes and a sterling crisis.<sup>52</sup> With Shanghai under Japanese control from 1941, periphery interests could do little, though the British there continued to live life in as normal of a fashion as possible.<sup>53</sup> By the time the Second World War was over, the British presence in China was unrecognisable from that that had existed before. Extraterritoriality—gained following the First Opium War—had been surrendered. British interests were now to survive by promising ‘equitable

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<sup>49</sup> Fung, ‘The Sino-British Rapprochement’, pp.81-5 and 98-99; Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*, pp.605-6.

<sup>50</sup> Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*, pp.607-8.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p.606.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.612-3.

<sup>53</sup> Though now Japanese occupied, the SMC continued to run the city. Attitudes prevailed amongst employees, such as those of the police, that they were ‘still doing Police work, we weren’t working for the Japanese.’ Robert Bickers, *Empire Made Me: An Englishman Adrift in Shanghai* (London: Penguin, Allen Lane, 2004), p.315. See also Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.154-61.

treatment' to their recent Chinese allies as the Board of Trade hoped concurrently to establish technological centres, to aid Chinese development of their own railways, telephone systems and utilities in order to retain a foothold for commercial operations.<sup>54</sup> With these substantial changes, all sources pointed to a continuation of the China trade in the immediate post-war years, and expatriate 'China hands' viewed the period as simply an interregnum, after which British business in China would continue, albeit in a different form than before.<sup>55</sup> However, such views proved fanciful. By 1947, Britain began to discourage movement to China, following the realisation that any further investment would help to modernise the country, spur further development of nationalism, and potentially cause a complete closure of British trade involvement and investment.<sup>56</sup>

Worse news quickly followed, and with the Kuomintang steadily, though unexpectedly, losing the war against the Chinese Communist Party, the British were forced to rapidly change their tactics to preserve what could be saved of British investment in China. With the Foreign Office accepting that £81 million of bank loans were likely to be lost, focus turned instead to protecting £300 million of British commercial property after the communist victory. Attempts to establish friendly relations to do so showed promise, but ultimately failed to come to fruition.<sup>57</sup> British business in China, at least to the casual observer, was destroyed, with companies further forced to pay huge retroactive taxes and fees against the (rarely materialising) promise of liquidation being allowed by the PRC. Jardine Matheson, for example, paid up to £140,000 in a single year, before drawing a line and simply writing off £30m of assets.<sup>58</sup> Assets based in the British territory of Hongkong, however, remained under these firm's control—many larger firms had made conscious efforts at relocation to colony from treaty ports such as Shanghai since 1925—and with them, the still active CA continued to exist.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Aron Shai, 'Britain, China and the End of Empire', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 15, 2 (1980), pp.290-2.

<sup>55</sup> Shai, 'Britain, China and the End of Empire', p.293. This view was shared by the China Association, as noted in Aron Shai, 'Imperialism Imprisoned: The Closure of British Firms in the Peoples Republic of China', *English Historical Review*, CIV, CCCCX (1989), pp.88-9.

<sup>56</sup> Shai, 'Britain, China and the End of Empire', p. 295.

<sup>57</sup> David C. Wolf, 'To Secure a Convenience: Britain Recognizes China – 1950', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 18, 2 (1983), pp.313-321.

<sup>58</sup> Shai, 'Imperialism Imprisoned', pp.97-102.

<sup>59</sup> Robert Bickers, *Out of China: How the Chinese Ended the Era of Western Domination* (Allen Lane, 2017), p.231.



This, then, was the world in which the CA came to be established and operated. It was a world in which, overall, the British government was consistently reluctant to take too involved or too aggressive a position—even in the early days of British contact with China, when the tea trade was very profitable, this was the case. China was never subject to full British imperial expansion, and (largely) retained its territorial sovereignty, with British influence instead coming in the twin forms of metropole-based finance and periphery-based settlers. It was within the space that existed here that the CA operated—at the interstices, as it were, of the metropole and the periphery, and of the political and the civic. Throughout each of the stages British policy passed through from 1889 to 1955, the CA was actively involved in discussing policy, seeking—if not always successfully—to shape it to meet its own aims and ends.

### **The British in China: individuals and firms**

While understanding British policy towards China, and metropole-periphery connections, is important to remember that, at the heart of all lay the agency of individuals and firms. It was this that shaped not only that policy, but also the actions of the CA. It is, critical, therefore, that we understand who these agents—British residents and interests in China—were. Bickers offers a framework that helps us classify them and this thesis takes this framework as a basis as it provides a concise structure with which to divide the disparate British presence in China into what we might call measurable groups; the framework is also the most comprehensively developed for the location under study. For Bickers, the British population in China was comprised of four distinct groups: two of these, expatriates and settlers, are most relevant for this study, as they are, in essence, the communities that contain those we are most interested in—merchants, traders, and businessmen. Bickers notes the main distinction between the two and the key foundation of their identities as the strength of their links to China—Expatriates were simply sojourning, whilst settlers were founding livelihoods and families intrinsically tied to China.<sup>60</sup> Their day to day existence is explored here; alongside these were the government officials who supported these groups and represented the official British presence, whilst

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<sup>60</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.67-71.

missionaries are a distinct presence of their own.<sup>61</sup> Through these distinctions, Bickers seeks to explain the conflict which arose between British residents in China—a factor pertinent for this study, as the disagreements between expatriate and settler groups did, at times, spill over into the operations of the CA.

Accurate population statistics for these expatriate and settler groups are not readily available, and are difficult to define to any degree of accuracy. Bickers has noted that settlers were predominant numerically, but goes no further than this.<sup>62</sup> Directories of foreign residents in China provide the greatest opportunity for further insight, but are limited by the fact they do not record nationalities of individuals—as a glance at these directories shows, many British firms employed staff of other nationalities. In the brief calculations undertaken below, those with Portuguese, German or Chinese names have therefore been excluded (alongside others). Furthermore ascertaining which firms were able to dispatch men from Britain as expatriates, and which were purely China based is a similarly imprecise undertaking. This, ultimately is best done using wider knowledge of these firms combined with indicators in directories such as business members listed in London (suggesting a sister firm in Britain) or, in other cases, London branches. Where uncertainty occurred, individuals have been counted as expatriates, to ensure this calculation gives the largest possible percentage for their presence in China. Although the figures shown in table 1.1 are only a rough guide, they nonetheless present a guideline of between five and ten percent of the British populace as one formed by sojourners involved in finance, shipping or trade. This thesis is largely the story of these expatriates and the trade with China that they led, the trade which was, ultimately, the cause for the foundation of the CA. Nathan A. Pelcovits has noted, and later analysis confirms, that the CA was dominated by these men. They were, as defined in the introduction to this work, transitory, residents in China for only a period of time. But their sojourn in China was unique to the country, coloured by the location and subject to different nuances to the wider, generalised expatriate experience already noted.

In China these men were often found in the employ of a few key big businesses. For the China expatriate, multinational firms including Jardine Matheson and Swires,

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<sup>61</sup> Of course, there could be sub identities in such groups, too. Expatriates might be true business elites, or simply ‘middle class sojourners’ who were prominent in Hongkong. See Bickers, ‘Shanghaianders and Others’, p.293, and *Britain in China*, p.67-71.

<sup>62</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.67.

**Table 1.1:** Commercial expatriates as a percentage of British population, Shanghai and Hongkong.<sup>63</sup>

	<b>British Population</b>	<b>Expatriates</b>	<b>Percentage of British Population</b>
<hr/>			
Shanghai			
1890	1,574	126	8.00%
1900	2,691	147	5.46%
1910	4,779	246	5.55%
Hongkong			
1891	1,448	146	10.30%
1901	3,007	163	5.42%
1911	3,761	209	5.56%

alongside banks such as the HSBC, dispatched these men to postings wherever necessary in Asia. A lavish lifestyle was available to this select group, especially in Shanghai, where ‘even the junior members of large British firms could afford a life style far beyond that available to their contemporaries back in England’—able to keep a pony and belong to ‘two or three’ clubs—and this elite consciously separated themselves from the rest of the British residents in China, as in other outposts of the formal and informal British Empire.<sup>64</sup> For these men, loyalty to their respective company was key, and friendship and business networks would be formed even on the journey to China, with new recruits travelling together, first class, in the hope of forging relationships that would last until they had risen to seniority in the business. Many, too, were strong associationalists, and members of a plethora of clubs and societies that ranged from elite clubs, such as the Shanghai Club—home, as Noel Coward quipped, and testament to the decadence available in the city, to a bar so long

<sup>63</sup> Overall Population statistics for China are drawn from Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.125 and Bickers, *Shanghaianders and Others*, p.292. Expatriates have been identified from *The Chronicle & Directory for China*, which was available for the closest date to population statistics, as listed in the bibliography of this work. Unfortunately the Hongkong directory for 1912 investigated was incomplete, and so a combination of the 1910 and 1912 directories was used to produce the 1911 figure for the location.

<sup>64</sup> Harumi Goto-Shibata, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai, 1925-31*, p.5; Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.70 and pp.96-7. Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, p.61. Similar separation by class was visible in British communities in Egypt, where it was on occasion a more important separator than race. Whidden, ‘Expatriates in Cosmopolitan Egypt’, p.48 and p.60.

‘one could see the curvature of the earth in it’—to ethnic associations.<sup>65</sup> Final career progression for the most successful would see these men become either partners or stockholders in a large firm, or running their own, smaller, business.<sup>66</sup> Terms of service with companies could run into decades, although often punctuated by home leave, and ultimately a return to Britain was more likely for the members of this group compared to others.<sup>67</sup> The return, as we shall see, could be for retirement, but was, for some, marked by continued employment at the London end of a China-linked business. With often a strong record of associational membership—many sojourners in Asia viewed associations as critical to their lives because it gave them a home from home and served as an important network hub, this goes some way towards explaining why expatriate returnees, as we will see, form a substantial percentage of the CA’s membership.<sup>68</sup>

It was the settler population, however, that formed the greatest percentage of the British inhabitants in China at any given time. They were employed in treaty port service industries, ensuring the smooth operation of expatriate big business, or else were land speculators and small business owners—400 businesses existed in Shanghai alone in the 1890’s, but only a few were more than local affairs.<sup>69</sup> China had become their chosen destination not through any great will, but simply through the mechanisms of the imperial job market.<sup>70</sup> But with return transit fares prohibitive and entire livelihoods based in China and difficult to be uprooted, many settled and raised future generations of their families in the British enclaves dotted throughout China,

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<sup>65</sup> For details, Buelmann, *Clubbing Together*, specifically chapter five. For the Shanghai Club’s famous bar see Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, pp.39-40, or Josephine McDermott, ‘Another round: Shanghai reopens 110ft bar fabled for colonial decadence’, *The Telegraph*, 4 October 2010 (available online at <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/8036306/Another-round-Shanghai-reopens-110ft-bar-fabled-for-colonial-decadence.html>, last accessed 28 November 2018).

<sup>66</sup> For numerous examples of this career progression amongst the membership of the CA see appendix A. To give but one example, Jardine Matheson & Co. had 40 partners overall in the period 1832-1906, and the London end of the business, Matheson & Co., operated with five or six partners at any given time. See Maggie Keswick, (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books ltd, 1982), p.264. A discussion of how careers progressed for men in firms in Singapore (a number of which were involved with the CA) can be found in Chang Hai Ding ‘Sino-British Mercantile Relations in Singapore’s Entrepot Trade 1870-1915’ in Jerome Ch’en and Nicholas Tarling (eds.), *Studies in the Social History of China & South East Asia: Essays in Memory of Victor Purcell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

<sup>67</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.71.

<sup>68</sup> See for example Cohen, *In the Club*.

<sup>69</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp. 69-70; Osterhammel, ‘British Business in China, 1860’s-1950’s’ in Davenport Hines and Jones (eds.), *British Business in Asia since 1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.192.

<sup>70</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.73.

their very lives dependent on the continuation of extraterritoriality and unequal treaties.<sup>71</sup> As a result, the group is often typified by its active political positioning—aggressive or defensive as required—that this precarious position created, exemplified, for instance, by the creation of the Shanghai International Settlement and Municipal Council which governed China’s largest modern city on a questionable legal basis.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, these British settlers in China caused a near constant headache to the Foreign Office with their deviations from official imperial policy to pursue their own goals.<sup>73</sup> Their deep-rooted livelihoods largely precluded a return to Britain, however those that did experience economic success could, for example, sell their business and make their way home.<sup>74</sup> Although this is often difficult to assess in the absence of records that could shed light on this, this seems to have been the case for several CA members.<sup>75</sup> They are largely absent from the CA’s London leadership, however, as they were no longer economically dependent on China and seem to have, therefore, cared little for the CA’s political activities.

With the settler presence largely based in Shanghai (Hongkong, the other centre of British population in China, retained a highly transitory populace, and Darwin has gone as far as to suggest wider China was home to the ‘expatriates’ and Shanghai the home to the ‘settlers’) it was no coincidence that the Shanghai branch of the CA was notable for its reputation as somewhat of a firebrand when compared to the often sedate methods employed by the London headquarters.<sup>76</sup> This would appear

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p.67.

<sup>72</sup> This was clear even to contemporaries, with William Crane Johnstone writing in 1937 of the ‘legality of the land regulations’ on which the international settlement was based. See William Crane Johnstone, *The Shanghai Problem* (California: Stanford University Press, 1937), pp.48-53.

<sup>73</sup> Some examples are efforts to seize control of the Shanghai mixed court during the chaos of the 1911 revolution, attempts to expand the sphere of influence of the Shanghai Municipal Council through a large road building program and their loyalty to the Shanghai Volunteer Corps in times of conflict. See Robert Bickers, ‘Shanghaianders: The Formation and Identity of the British Settler Community in Shanghai’, p.174 and also pp.179. The SMC’s efforts at road expansion as a means of expanding influence is also displayed by its appearance in the councils official reports of 1915, 1916 and 1921 available online at <https://archive.org/search.php?query=shanghai%20municipal%20council>, (last accessed 12 October 2017). For the SMC seizing control of the Shanghai mixed court – and further specifics of settler expansion, see also Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.126.

<sup>74</sup> Bickers, *Shanghaianders and Others*, p.297 discusses the potential for movement between the categories of British migrants in China.

<sup>75</sup> A. Ilbert, for example, founded the Shanghai based firm Ilbert & Co., withdrew his capital, and returned to Britain where he was a founding member of the CA. for a short history of the firm see Arnold Wright (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya: Its History, People, Commerce, Industries, and Resources* (London: Lloyd’s Greater Britain Publishing Company, Ltd., 1908), p.60.

<sup>76</sup> For the transitory nature of the Hongkong population see Robert Bickers, ‘Shanghaianders and Others’, p.293. For the geographical distinction applied to the groups see Darwin, ‘Orphans of Empire’, p.333.

infrequently, although over a sustained period of time, as a series of disputes between the metropole expatriate and periphery settler based interests that came to co-exist within the CA, often over the Association's methods and aims.<sup>77</sup> For these reasons, then, although it is clear the CA was an expatriate-led organisation, we must be willing to consider, too, its interactions with the settler population of Shanghai, and to do so, build an understanding of their motivations.

Furthermore, while expatriates and settlers were distinct groups in China they nonetheless shared enough common ground and interests to both figure prominently in the history of the CA. It was not until 1925 that the two would become easily separable entities. Until that year the groups were intrinsically linked was by their interdependence: expatriates in China could not succeed without the acquiescence, and ultimately some support, of the settler community. Settlers provided the manpower to run expatriate business interests. Concurrently, settlers had to retain some support of the expatriates who sat on the Shanghai Municipal Council.<sup>78</sup> But of course there is a much more fundamental reason for this interdependence: the simple fact that the British presence in China never totalled more than a tiny percentage of the total population. In Shanghai, a major British enclave, Britons made up only 1.16 per cent; the same holds true for Hongkong.<sup>79</sup> As a result, the two groups could not afford to become overly fragmented and dissonant for fear of being overwhelmed by any anti-British feeling that developed in China.

Interdependent in this way the two also shared, at least at the first half of the time period this study covers, notable defining characteristics in line with the current overarching image that exists for both—one which presents both groups as unequivocally snobbish, myopic and racist.<sup>80</sup> This emerged as a conscious effort to maintain racial separation from the host population, and an identity of racial

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<sup>77</sup> For the rebellion of the Shanghai Branch of the Association which best typifies this, see Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, pp.294-299.

<sup>78</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.127.

<sup>79</sup> Robert Bickers, 'Shanghailanders: The Formation and Identity of the British Settler Community in Shanghai', p.176. In Hongkong, the 1864 census recorded 1,963 European and American residents, and 119,535 'Chinese etc.', as reproduced in N.B. Dennys, Wm. Mayers, and Chas Fred King (lieut. R.M.A.), *The Treaty Ports of China and Japan. A Complete Guide to the Open Ports of those Countries, Together with Peking, Yedo, Hongkong and Macao* (London: Trübner and Co., 1867), p.17. In 1901 in Hongkong there were 3,007 British residents, compared with 274,543 Chinese. See *Census of the British Empire, 1901: Report with Summary and Detailed Tables for the Several Colonies, &c., Area, Houses and Population; also Population Classified By Ages, Condition as to Marriage, Occupations, Birthplaces, Religions, Degrees of Education and Infirmities* (London: Darling & Son Ltd, 1906), pp.134-5.

<sup>80</sup> Darwin, 'Orphans of Empire', pp.329-330.

superiority, as a defence mechanism with the British government unlikely to sanction military support.<sup>81</sup> Spurred by both works of fiction focusing on the yellow peril, and non-fiction stressing negative Chinese ‘characteristics’ read before departure to China, efforts to retain distance only strengthened on arrival.<sup>82</sup> Children were to be sent home for education, where funds allowed, or at least to a school for the British. Mixed marriage was heavily frowned upon, and expatriates could even lose their employment as a consequence of this. Concubinage, extant in the early days of the British presence in China, was now unthinkable, at least in public. Some firms even frowned upon relationships with women of other western nationalities. J.H. Scott, later to be C.A. Chairman and head of the Swire Group wrote scathingly to an employee ‘You are ruining your chances with regards advancement in our firm—“American women and Nips!” We will not tolerate these vices, they lead a man into trouble, destroy his efficiency and he sets a bad example to others.’<sup>83</sup> Food was to be British, Chinese clothes were not to be worn, and language skills were to be kept at a bare minimum.<sup>84</sup> Communication with the Chinese could always be conducted through an interpreter, or in demeaning Pidgin English, and business was conducted through a comprador rather than direct channels.<sup>85</sup>

Of course, whilst this projection of detached superiority was often regarded as enough to stop local Chinese from actively attacking the British in times of peace, in times of war a more direct defence was required. In Shanghai, this took the form of

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<sup>81</sup> That the British consciously bound together against the Chinese ‘other’, it has been suggested, began as early as the Macartney embassy of 1793. Faced with failure following rejection by the Chinese who saw them as barbarians, they drew together not only in anger, but in a deep rooted sense of Britishness. See Linda Colley, ‘Britishness and Otherness: An Argument’, *Journal of British Studies*, 31, 4 (1992), pp.1-3.

<sup>82</sup> Arthur Henderson Smith, *Chinese Characteristics* (New York, Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1894), p.98 offers an example of a work on supposed Chinese ‘characteristics’ which included contempt for foreigners. For a wider discussion see Stan Neal, *Jardine Matheson and Chinese Migration in the British Empire, 1833-1853* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Northumbria, 2015), pp. 15-20. Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.22-67 offers a brief overview of the ‘yellow peril’ literary canon.

<sup>83</sup> Colin N. Crisswell, *The Taipans: Hongkongs Merchant Princes* (Hongkong: Oxford University Press, 1981), p.165.

<sup>84</sup> For all of the above see also Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.96-102.

<sup>85</sup> The lack of language skills amongst the British inhabitants is discussed in chapter four of this thesis. A history of some of Jardine Matheson & Co.’s most prominent compradors can be found in Yen-p’ing Hao ‘The Compradors’ in Maggie Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books Ltd. 1982). For a more general discussion of their role—which could extend considerably, for the most talented, beyond simply that of middleman into entrepreneurial moves to support the firms efforts, and management of British firms interests—see Yen-p’ing Hao, ‘A “New Class” in China’s Treaty Ports: The Rise of the Comprador-Merchants’, *The Business History Review*, 44, 4 (1970), pp.446-59 or Yen-P’ing Hao, *The Comprador in Nineteenth Century China: Bridge Between East and West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

the Shanghai Volunteer Corps, a force drawn from among the British residents of Shanghai. With the British a tiny fraction of the population of Shanghai, the corps stood ever ready to defend British interests, led by the regiment of light horse drawn exclusively from the elite British expatriates in the city.<sup>86</sup>

Naturally, these ideas could come home with returnees from China, and have a profound effect on the undertakings of the CA, particularly early in its existence. As these ideas of superiority and distance influenced British interests, calls made of the government became increasingly aggressive. Pelcovits' work outlines how the CA in London, early in its life, came to believe that the intransigence of the Chinese government to open itself completely to trade was simply due to Chinese backwardness.<sup>87</sup> Other calls were made for British territorial gains, in the form of a Yangtze protectorate mentioned above, though this was later realised to have been unrealistic. At the periphery, as discussed above, Shanghai settlers pushed for constant expansion.

Conscious of the drawbacks of supporting such a stance, one discussed throughout this work, this was not a view which the CA espoused for long. It quickly became a moderate voice, to the dismay of Shanghai. Indeed, it was the elite expatriate community that was the first to soften the view of racial superiority after 1925. A gradual process was undertaken to embrace a Foreign Office shift in policy to co-operation with the Chinese government. This was aided by the publication of a handbook by the Department for Overseas Trade entitled *China: Notes on Some Aspects of Life in China for the Information of Business Visitors*, which was designed to offer new recruits a more balanced view of China.<sup>88</sup> With Swires at the forefront, personal links with Chinese businesses were also fostered. Isolation was no longer allowed, and contact was encouraged to occur across racial boundaries, much to the disgust of the Shanghai settler classes.<sup>89</sup> The CA contributed, in its own way, to these efforts, re-aligning their view to fit official policy, as we shall see throughout this thesis. Consequently, greater understanding of the CA will add depth to the

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<sup>86</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.97. For a later assessment about the role of Scottish expatriates in defending Shanghai, see also Isabella Jackson, 'The Shanghai Scottish: Scottish, Imperial and Local Identities, 1914-41', in T. M. Devine and Angela McCarthy (eds.), *The Scottish Experience in Asia, c.1700 to the Present: Settlers and Sojourners* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies series, 2017), pp. 235-57.

<sup>87</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, pp.256-7.

<sup>88</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.144.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p.134.



overarching debate on the British presence in China.

To complete this short overview of the British in China in the period under consideration, we must briefly return to the final two groups outlined: missionaries and government officials. The Christian mission presence in China began as early as the sixteenth century, although early efforts saw little success. Deterred, in many cases, by the isolation of the Qing Empire that we have already noted, it was not until China was opened to trade that the mission presence could spread effectively beyond the edges of China, with greater freedom to follow with the signing of the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858.<sup>90</sup> Though this thesis focuses on expatriates and, to a lesser extent, settlers, these groups—and the CA—did come into contact with missionaries. Largely, we find these interactions were not positive. Big business interests and expatriates and missionaries, particularly, found a considerable dislike for one another in China. Missionaries, on the one hand, were shocked by the behaviour exhibited by the other sectors of the British presence, especially in the perceived decadent lifestyle available in Shanghai.<sup>91</sup> For their part, the British business presence found the efforts of missions an annoyance as the introduction of Christianity eroded established hierarchies and power structures, leaving Chinese elites who lost status to develop some of the earliest anti-foreign sentiment that emerged in China.<sup>92</sup> Where the two found some overlap was in the pursuit of the development of Western knowledge and education in China. Both, as will be discussed later in this work, had reasons for supporting the development of technical knowledge in China. But, as we shall see, the relationships between the CA and missionaries would come to mirror those of the wider business community. Clerical or missionary guests rarely attended CA functions, although the Bishop of Korea, Peking, Hongkong and North China were notable exceptions, if still a small number of representatives for 65 years of social gatherings.<sup>93</sup> In the absence of such guests, much amusement was gained on occasion

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<sup>90</sup> Paul A. Cohen, 'Christian Missions and their Impact to 1900' in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China Volume 10: Late Ch'ing 1800-1911, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp.544-53.

<sup>91</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.94-5.

<sup>92</sup> Cohen, 'Christian Missions and their Impact to 1900', pp.563-6.

<sup>93</sup> See the China Association reports of annual dinners, included in the Associations annual report for 1909-10, appendix, p.164, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London; Associations annual report for 1919-20, supplement, p.9, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London; and Associations annual report for 1924-25, p.16, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

by the chairman's inability to competently say grace. When J.H. Scott did so in 1908, the assertion that he had fulfilled his task in a 'devout and earnest way' was met with 'loud laughter.'<sup>94</sup> Although a wide-reaching body in terms of its membership and aims, the CA was certainly not religious, except in the loosest terms. Members, of course, could be more or less religious on a personal level, but this was not on display within the Association itself.

The final group, government officials, we have already investigated, in a way. As the presence of the British government on the ground in China, they were largely defined by their support for the official British policy discussed above. Although in the early days of British involvement in China these men retained substantial individual freedom to implement policy, this was largely eroded by the time the CA was in operation—or at least, soon after, with the British response to the Boxer uprising one of the last occurrences of this.<sup>95</sup> Later they would play a key role in altering the shape of British interests in China by reforming their presence after 1925 to stress equality with Chinese partners and interests.<sup>96</sup> With Britain the only nation to ensure full consular coverage in every port open to trade in China this diplomatic corps became a substantial body.<sup>97</sup> Other works have noted, as a wider pattern, that government employees are predisposed to higher levels of involvement within the voluntary sector.<sup>98</sup> With a significant body of men to drawn upon, potentially predisposed to engagement with voluntary associations, this thesis will also consider the role these men could play within the CA upon their return to Britain following their retirement—alongside, of course, the way the CA might seek to influence them whilst they remained actively in the employment of government.

While these groups came to found the British individual presence in China, they did not always act simply as individuals. Also of importance is providing a solid conceptualisation of the institutions these individuals operated within; namely, firms,

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<sup>94</sup> See the Associations annual report for 1908-09, appendix, p.153, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>95</sup> J.E. Hoare, *Embassies in the East: The Story of British Embassies in Japan, China and Korea from 1859 to the Present* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999), p.9.

<sup>96</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.117-20.

<sup>97</sup> Hoare, *Embassies in the East*, p.7.

<sup>98</sup> See, for example, Nevbahar Ertas, 'Public Service Motivation Theory and Voluntary Organizations: Do Government Employees Volunteer More?', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 43, 2 (2014), pp.254-71; David J. Houston, "'Walking the Walk" of Public Service Motivation: Public Employees and Charitable Gifts of Time, Blood, and Money', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16, 1 (2006), pp.67-86.

companies and corporations. As already noted in the introduction to this work, British commercial interests largely mirrored two sectors of the individual populace—expatriates and settlers. Expatriate interests, like expatriates themselves, held strong links to the metropole, and alongside this, to the British centre of expatriate population in East Asia, Hongkong. These are the firms that are noted above as having been co-opted into British government plans and efforts to radically overhaul the British presence in China after 1925, as explored in Cain and Hopkins work *British Imperialism* and Bickers *Britain in China*. Many were multinational trading firms. The largest of these followed the patterns of British multinational development outlined by Geoffrey Jones in his work *Merchants to Multinationals*, moving from beginnings as purely traders and merchants to later diversify into finance, shipping and direct investment in businesses in China and Worldwide.<sup>99</sup> Key members of this group who appear in this thesis are Jardine Matheson, the Swire Group, and Dodwell & Co., who were all involved in China for much of the time period covered by this work. Later multinationals to enter China, who played a key role in the re-organisation of the British presence, were Imperial Chemical Industries [ICI], Asiatic Petroleum, BAT, and Unilever.<sup>100</sup> Alongside these are those who provided finance to the Chinese government as part of wider British policies. Predominant here is the HSBC, although the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China was also notable. Finally, the P&O line represented a major shipping interest and one of the largest firms active in China. Accepting that earlier works have established the outcomes of their co-operation with the British government, this thesis will investigate some of the mechanisms that underpinned this co-operation and fostered the development of connections between the two.

Settler interests are more difficult to define, beyond the level already explored in the introduction to this work. They were, at their largest, import/export firms, small manufacturers, or both. This was certainly the case for Ilbert and Co., who will feature later in this thesis. The difficulty of defining such firms is highlighted by work by Isabella Jackson, who defines Ilbert and Co. as an expatriate interest, a problematic

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<sup>99</sup> Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*.

<sup>100</sup> For a brief overview of the later development of British trade in China, including firms such as BAT, ICI and Asiatic Petroleum, see Jürgen Osterhammel, 'British Business in China, 1860's-1950's'. See also Sherman Cochran, *Encountering Chinese Networks: Western, Japanese and Chinese Corporations in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), specifically pp.29-31 for Asiatic Petroleum and pp. 44-69 for BAT. For the Anglo-Dutch Unilever (of which the British component was Lever Bros) see Putten, *Corporate Behaviour and Political Risk*, chapter eight.

conclusion as they were tied purely to the business networks of a single location, Shanghai, and therefore reliant upon its status as provided by unequal treaties.<sup>101</sup> Individuals who left these firms could return to Britain if successful, and as noted, found either ‘sister’ firms to their Eastern counterparts and continue trading, or, more simply, bring with them their allegiance to Shanghai and its settler community and hope to lobby for its development in the metropole.<sup>102</sup> How both these types of firms—true multinationals and those which were, in essence, tied to Shanghai—co-existed within the CA will be explored in this thesis.<sup>103</sup>

It is apt to note here that while the firms linked into the CA were indeed competitors, many had experience of co-operation prior to the foundation of the CA due to the particularities of East Asian trade. The HSBC had been founded with capital provided by all of the major British firms trading in East Asia at the time, with the exception of Jardine Matheson, although by 1877 the two were linked when William Keswick took a seat on the board of the bank.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, as the largest firms had diversified their interests efforts were made to limit risk, and as such newly founded interests were often joint efforts, creating ‘intra- and interfirm networks’.<sup>105</sup> Prominent examples of co-operation include Jardine Matheson and Dent & Co. founding the Canton Insurance Company as a joint enterprise, and alternating leadership on a yearly basis.<sup>106</sup> The spread of capital could be much more diverse than simply through two partners, however. When Jardine Matheson formed the China Coast Steam Navigation Company it retained 64 per cent of the original shares, with 16 per cent taken by other foreign merchants, and 20 per cent by Chinese interests.<sup>107</sup> Informal co-operation, without the investment of capital, was also prominent. The most striking examples were a series of shipping conferences, organised to regulate rates, numbers of sailings, ports served and goods carried on both homeward and outward ‘trunk’ lines between Britain and East Asia and onwards, under further ‘branch’ agreements, to the final

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<sup>101</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, p.83.

<sup>102</sup> Webster, ‘The Development of British Commercial and Political Networks in the Straits Settlements 1800 to 1868’, pp.917.

<sup>103</sup> Appendix B offers a brief history and outline of the structure of the most important of these firms, and also outlines the naming conventions used in this thesis to refer to them.

<sup>104</sup> Maurice Collis, *Wayfoong: The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation: A Study of East Asia’s Transformation, Political, Financial and Economic, during the last hundred years* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), p.29.

<sup>105</sup> Connel, *A Business in Risk*, p.6. See also Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, chapter 6.

<sup>106</sup> Connel, *A Business in Risk*, p.6.

<sup>107</sup> Kwang-ching Liu ‘A Chinese Entrepreneur’ in Maggie Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books ltd., 1982), pp.108-9.

destination of goods. With the first conference established by John Swire in 1879, stable agreements followed by 1893, after which the 'China Conference' became a permanent feature of international trade.'<sup>108</sup> As Jones notes, 'competition was often followed by collusion, even as natural suspicions, distrust, and disagreements persisted.'<sup>109</sup> From 1889, the CA offered these companies an entirely different route to co-operation in London, opening up networks and access across a broad range of stakeholders.

### **The China Association's place in an associational world**

In order for us to understand the CA as an organization, it is not enough, however, to contextualise the background of those involved and the reasons for their links with China. We must also consider the CA as an association. Even a cursory glance at its records reveals a multi-faceted body with a wide range of objects, aims and goals. Given the timing of its establishment, the late 1880s, it was formed not in isolation, but has roots that lie at the very heart of a much wider British club scene. The Thatched House Club, the venue of the CA's founding dinner, was noted by Pelcovits as the favourite gathering spot of the 'Old China Hands', providing a more informal point of social contact for some CA members alongside the CA's formal gatherings, and possibly even the meeting point which introduced several of the founding members, had they not previously made acquaintances in East Asia.<sup>110</sup> Certainly, as of 1908 Walford's *County Families* recorded ten members of the club, of which five had resided in East Asia.<sup>111</sup> But the Thatched House Club is of wider significance still as the venue for meetings of such diverse associations as the Dilettanti Society, the Royal Astronomical Club, the Royal London Yacht Club and Johnson's Club amongst at least

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<sup>108</sup> Malcom Falkus, *The Blue Funnel Legend: A History of the Ocean Steam Ship Company, 1865-1973* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1990), pp.117-135. Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, pp.73-4. For a wider discussion of how Jardine Matheson built informal networks see Carrol Matheson Connel, The applicability of resource-based theory to the interpretation of strategic management in Jardine Matheson, specifically chapter four.

<sup>109</sup> Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, p.74.

<sup>110</sup> Draft minutes of the CA were exchanged between officers of the CA at the club, either in person or via the club itself if members missed each other, as recorded in letters between the original secretary R.S. Gundry and chairman William Keswick. See R.S. Gundry to William Keswick, 12 March 1890 Cambridge University Library, Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

<sup>111</sup> Edward Walford, *Walford's County Families of the United Kingdom or royal manual of the titled and untitled aristocracy of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland containing a brief notice of the descent, birth, marriage, education and appointments of each person his heir apparent or presumptive, as also a record of the offices which he hitherto held, together with his town address and country residence: Forty-Eighth Annual Publication* (London: Spottiswoode & Co., Ltd, 1908).

22 others, as well as nine masonic lodges. Indeed, it was described by a contemporary as ‘for many years the head-quarters of the annual dinners or other convivial meetings of the leading clubs and literary and scientific associations.’<sup>112</sup> Whether it had been the home of an earlier ‘China Club’ which was ‘frequented chiefly by merchants and bankers’ but for which unfortunately, no further detail is available, we cannot ascertain.<sup>113</sup> But what is sure is that not only did the CA undertake a range of activities common to a plethora of voluntary associations, it was founded at one of the centres of British associational life, and in a city, London, that had boasted a thriving associational scene for a considerable time.

In order to understand voluntary associations and their wider role, it is important to examine their history and evolution, particularly how they came to be, in essence, a long-standing linchpin of British life and society. While in a wider historical sense clubs and societies of a similar make to that under discussion can be traced back as far as Greco-Roman times and to the medieval period in Italy, these were not the progenitors of the British associational world, and had little influence upon its formation.<sup>114</sup> Instead, the formative years of British associational culture are best traced to sixteenth and seventeenth-century England, when an increase in the popularity of drinking, feasting and games, with the churchyard, marketplace and street as public locations for activities, led to a wave of increasing public and private sociability. Kinship, neighbourhood and community bonds grew, and laid foundations for the growth and spread of associations that was to come.<sup>115</sup> By the later eighteenth century, clubs and societies had grown to form a key part of life throughout the English speaking world.<sup>116</sup> And while a decline has often been noted in American associationalism in the twentieth century, Peter Clark argues that Britain has remained a nation of joiners to the present day, noting the continued increases in membership to

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<sup>112</sup> Edward Walford, ‘Pall Mall; Clubland’, in *Old and New London: Volume 4* (London, 1878), pp. 140-164; John Timbs, *Club Life of London with Anecdotes of the Clubs, Coffee Houses and Taverns of the Metropolis during the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Vol I* (London, 1866), pp.318-9. The proclivity of the ‘Old China Hands’ to meet at this location is mentioned in Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.158.

<sup>113</sup> Ralph Nevill, *London Clubs, Their History & Treasures* (London: F.A. Stokes, 1911), p.212.

<sup>114</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.14-19. Jose C. Moya espouses a similar view, in Jose C. Moya, ‘Immigrants and Associations: A Global Historical Perspective’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31, 5 (2005), p.836.

<sup>115</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, p.27.

<sup>116</sup> Morris, in ‘Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites’, p.95, places this boom in 1780, through to around 1850. For Clark, this boom began slightly earlier, during the reign of George III and expanding at an ever accelerating rate post 1770. See Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, p.124.

such societies as the RSPB and the National Trust into the 1990s.<sup>117</sup>

Urbanization was a key factor in this eighteenth-century boom in associationalism. Improved living standards and a ‘consumer revolution’ of urban middle and upper classes, combined with the gentry seeking a fashionable existence centred on the London season, produced a pool of potential members from which the flourishing new associations could draw.<sup>118</sup> As other scholars have convincingly argued, by the time the CA was established, the ‘gentlemanly order’ had incorporated the types of men who were the backbone of the Association.<sup>119</sup> Additionally, urbanization produced greater numbers of migrants—internally within the British and Irish Isles, as well as overseas-bound migrants—who often chose associations as a way of forging new social links and networks.<sup>120</sup> Changes to the urban landscape also meant that taverns, inns and coffee houses became larger, and more suited to hosting meetings of associations, clubs and societies.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, turning once again to the Thatched House Club, we find that it had begun life as early as 1711 as a hotel named the Thatched House Tavern. A ‘large room for public meetings’ was added by the time of Pitt the Younger, and the Tavern relocated or redeveloped further in 1814, 1843, 1865 and 1873 adopting its new moniker as the Thatched House Club on the last of these occasions.<sup>122</sup>

Morris as well as Gamm and Putnam also place urbanization at the core of developments as a major mechanism behind the growth of associations. However, for these authors the main cause of change was the disruption of social order this brought. They argue that the growth of associations was the result of the need of new urban elites to ensure their position at the top of this new social hierarchy.<sup>123</sup> To do so

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<sup>117</sup> Gerald Gamm and Robert D. Putnam, ‘The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America, 1840-1940’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 29, 4 (1999), p.514, note that America saw mass growth of associations in the period 1850-1900. This growth slowed in the 1900-1910 period, before turning to stagnation or decline 1910-1940. For the Continued Associationalism of the British, see Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.470-91.

<sup>118</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.140-55.

<sup>119</sup> Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*, specifically part two, The Gentlemanly Order, 1850-1914.

<sup>120</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.158-61; Kyle Hughes, *The Scots in Victorian and Edwardian Belfast: A Study in Elite Migration* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013); or Tanja Bueltmann and Donald M. MacRaild, *The English Diaspora in North America: Migration, Ethnicity and Association, 1730s-1950s* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017).

<sup>121</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.161-166.

<sup>122</sup> Edward Walford, ‘Pall Mall; Clubland’, pp. 140-164; Walford, *Walford’s County Families of the United Kingdom*, p.xi notes its location as of 1908 was 86 St. James Street.

<sup>123</sup> For discussions of elites using societies for social control, see Gamm and Putnam, ‘The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America’, pp. 529-532; Morris, ‘Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites’, pp.96-100.

associations were formed that, despite a pretence of acting as a subscriber democracy, were controlled by a small number of elites via the creation of an oligarchy with a great deal of power resting in the hands of the few who were at the centre of the association.<sup>124</sup> The CA, certainly, would come to display at least oligarchic tendencies in its selection of leaders and its overall direction.<sup>125</sup> Such control would hold particular importance to an association formed ostensibly to represent the political aims of a wide group, as a disunited front would be a major disadvantage when negotiating with government.<sup>126</sup>

Freemasonry, one of the most successful examples of British associational life, proves especially apposite when seeking further motivations for the creation of associations in the formal and informal British Empire. For Freemasons, catering for returnees from Empire was a key feature of their organization, and one undeniably linked to political aims. A series of lodges were set up purely to receive Masons visiting from Empire locations in order that brethren could find, socialise and network with men of similar backgrounds whilst in Britain. Beginning with the aptly named Empire Lodge in London in 1885, Empress Lodge was founded in the same year to receive India based brethren, and 1906 and 1911 saw the founding of the Anglo-Colonial Lodge and Canada Lodge respectively. A clear example of political networking can be seen by focusing on Empire Lodge, which, in 1897, hosted 300 brethren from throughout Empire for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, including the premiers of five colonial governments.<sup>127</sup> Another association, the Victoria League, provided hospitality for imperial 'visitors' through activities such as tea and garden parties, Polo, and other social events. Providing, in the summer of 1902 alone, hospitality to some 4,000 visitors, Eliza Riedi argues that such sociability was inevitably for political ends, to ensure proper treatment which would strengthen colonial ties.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.256-7 and Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites', p.101 offer a description of this in the history of British Clubs. Such a move was clearly also prevalent in America, too, as Gramm and Putnam argue Associations becoming dominated by elites in fact helped create democracy in the country, as the population learned to elect leaders and respect their policies. Gramm and Putnam, 'The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America', pp.511-12.

<sup>125</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.159.

<sup>126</sup> A disunited front can be a major weakness for a political pressure group, especially if such disagreements become public. See Rob Baggot, *Pressure Groups Today* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp.58-61.

<sup>127</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs, "'Hands across the Sea'", pp. 248-50.

<sup>128</sup> Eliza Riedi, 'Women, Gender, and the Promotion of Empire: The Victoria League, 1901-1914', *The Historical Journal*, 45, 3 (2002), pp. 582-3.



Beyond this, networking provided a host of wider functions, not least the creation of business links.<sup>129</sup> The Canada Club in London, for example, provided a meeting point for prominent Canadians and Britons to meet throughout the nineteenth century, and proved advantageous for securing city investment for schemes in Canada.<sup>130</sup> Business networking has been also been noted as a key characteristic of ethnic associations and kinship networks which as immigrants, members of the CA may well have had some experience of, or involvement with, during their time in China. Such developments have been noted to be especially prominent in East Asia, where business networks were intertwined with these more informal networks of Ethnic Associations of Scots to a greater extent than anywhere else.<sup>131</sup> Indeed, at least 29 Scottish ethnic associations alone existed in East Asia.<sup>132</sup> These bodies supported migrants who, like the expatriates considered here, were often highly transient and thus faced similar pressures of dislocation and uprootedness by providing professional connections, and business opportunities, but also support, friendship and shared culture.<sup>133</sup> Alongside this they promoted national identities, and retaining ‘Britishness’—within which could easily bound, as discussed earlier in this chapter, a sense of racial superiority—was a key aim.<sup>134</sup> Besides this, separate national identities continued to flourish, promoted by such ethnic associations as Burns clubs, Caledonian societies and St Andrews societies, to use Scottish examples.<sup>135</sup>

Ethnic associations also allowed migrants a chance to ‘[utilize] patronage or to generate social capital to help them adjust to their new circumstances’.<sup>136</sup> Social capital is a concept of substantial interest when investigating voluntary associations. The process involves building networks to transform ‘individuals from self-seeking and egocentric calculators...into members of a community with shared interests,

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<sup>129</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs also notes the prevalence of networking within the Masonic order in ‘All in the Family’, p.453. See also Tanja Bueltmann, *Scottish Ethnicity and the Making of New Zealand Society, 1850 to 1930* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), pp.115-123.

<sup>130</sup> Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of people, goods and capital in the British World, c.1850-1914*, p.205; Burke, ‘Canada in Britain’.

<sup>131</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.168.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>133</sup> Angela McCarthy, ‘Scottish Migrant Ethnic identities in the British Empire since the 19th century’, p.6. Recent work on the English documents the extent of activities, see Bueltmann and MacRaild, *The English Diaspora in North America*.

<sup>134</sup> See Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.107 for an example of this occurring in New Zealand.

<sup>135</sup> Angela McCarthy, ‘Scottish Migrant Ethnic identities in the British Empire since the 19th Century’, p.5.

<sup>136</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.3.

shared assumptions about social relations, and a sense of the common good. Trust and reciprocity are crucial aspects.’<sup>137</sup> It has been argued that the required levels of trust to see social capital develop—in order that the trust can continue to exist when part of the ‘community’ do not receive immediate reciprocity for its actions—can only come from certain tightly knit groups, such as a ‘minority’ community.<sup>138</sup> This, certainly, was a condition met by the membership of the CA, the majority of whom had lived and worked in the small British enclaves of the China Coast communities and shared a socio-economic background. The creation of social capital, then, offered the CA significant potential to create trust and co-operation between otherwise competing China firms, and to better the China trade as a whole through informal networking. Beyond this internal network, the CA also held potential to build social capital between its members and important contacts outside of their tightly-knit inner circle. Such social capital is termed ‘bridging’ social capital, and scholars note its importance in connecting business interests run by immigrants to wider networks.<sup>139</sup> For the CA, as we will see, dinners were particularly important tools in this respect, providing platforms through which networking was enabled. The invitation of British government employees to all social functions, as well as the gathering together of business rivals and competitors on these occasions, were critical.

How exactly these formal dinners served as networking and political tools, and through what mechanism links were encouraged by them, is a burgeoning field of investigation. On a basic level, it has been noted that ‘it is common knowledge that in many, but not all, cultural contexts business deals get done over meals’, although there has been ‘little research’ done on this.<sup>140</sup> Others have suggested that as ‘Sharing food is the basic form of human commensality... It follows that it should also be the oldest diplomatic practice.’<sup>141</sup> In a modern setting, the value of the social event in creating personal relations at senior levels of business, paving the way for ‘inter-organizational

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<sup>137</sup> Kenneth Newton, ‘Social Capital and Democracy’, *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40, 5 (March/April 1997), p.576.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p.578.

<sup>139</sup> For a discussion of ‘bridging’ social capital and the role it holds for immigrants in a business setting, although in the modern day, see Caroline B. Brettell, ‘Voluntary Organizations, Social Capital, and the Social Incorporation of Asian Indian Immigrants in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex’, *Anthropological Quarterly*, 78, 4 (2005), pp.853-883.

<sup>140</sup> Andrew Sturdy, Mirela Schwarz and Andre Spicer, ‘Guess who’s coming to dinner? Structures and uses of liminality in strategic management consultancy’, *Human Relations*, 57, 9 (2006), p.934.

<sup>141</sup> Iver Neumann, *Diplomatic Sites: A Critical Enquiry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), p.45.

relationships' is noted, for example, as occurring at sporting events, lunches, or dinners.<sup>142</sup> These events, it has been argued, create an important 'liminal space', between the formality of a work setting and the informality of a social occasion.<sup>143</sup> In this way, these occasions, situated between the spheres of work and social life, introduce a potentially valuable and unique space for networking.

Other theories stress the worth of the performative aspect of such gatherings, by assessing the ability of toasts, speeches and other occurrences at particularly formal dinners to bind attendees together, under what can be referred to by the broader term of 'rituals' which build links to facilitate deals, alongside the dinners serving as a meeting place for the making of the deals themselves. Though, again, few studies have focused specifically upon this some literature that does exist looks at formal dinners at Oxbridge colleges.<sup>144</sup> This work has shown how these rituals—the complex nature and formality of the dinners themselves—are key in creating homogenous identities and viewpoints. In the case of Oxbridge colleges, this emerges as a shared viewpoint of the British class system.<sup>145</sup> Indeed, rituals of this performative nature have the potential to hold considerable power, either to manipulate relationships, or promote 'ideological positions.'<sup>146</sup> Alongside this, and remaining within the confines of Oxbridge, these formal dinners offer a chance to allow the face to face meeting necessary for the creation of networks, as they provide 'space for politicking, relationship-building, and information exchange' amongst those present.<sup>147</sup> For the CA, formal dinners and other social gatherings would offer the chance to express their own ideological viewpoints, and to create their own networks. They were a prominent tool for the CA, and one to which we will turn in some depth in chapter 3.

Similarly, ritual at Scottish ethnic society dinners was a powerful tool for reinforcing identities. Burns nights, particularly, came to be a point of shared memory amongst Scots who had left their homeland, including those in New Zealand. And though not a political site per se, much like Oxbridge dinners they came to serve as a facilitating space for this. Attendance of colonial elites ensured dinners became an

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<sup>142</sup> Sturdy, Schwarz and Spicer, 'Guess who's coming to dinner', p.936.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p.951.

<sup>144</sup> MariaLaura Di Domenico and Nelson Phillips, 'Sustaining the Ivory Tower: Oxbridge Formal Dining as Organizational Ritual', *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 18, 4 (December 2009), p.327.

<sup>145</sup> M. Tina Dacin, Kamal Munir and Paul Tracey, 'Formal Dining at Cambridge Colleges: Linking ritual performance and institutional maintenance', *Academy of Management Journal*, 53, 6 (2010), pp.1393-4.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., p.1396.

<sup>147</sup> Di Domenico and Phillips, 'Sustaining the Ivory Tower', p.326.

‘important networking hub’, at which shared interests were reinforced through toasts to shipping interests, or to ‘agricultural and pastoral interests’ of the local area. Criticism of government was also voiced, with politicians ‘frequently among the guests.’<sup>148</sup> St. Andrew’s dinners held in India during the time of the British Raj became ‘rituals of solidarity, filled with symbolic practices meant to unite those attending by invoking a common Scottish identity.’<sup>149</sup> Attended by those of a high socio-economic status, these dinners saw officials and commercial men as prominent attendees. Although relations between the two groups were often tense due to wider disagreements—dinners in Bengal and Calcutta, for example, served as the main opportunity to confront leading political figures about policy, with the exchanging of views through toasts and responding speeches—the gatherings nonetheless offered a chance to remember what they held in common, although they could, inevitably, reinforce rather than heal divisions.<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, networks in Burns Associations were not always limited to Scots, or even those of Scots descent, perhaps to ensure they were not restrictive in the breadth of connections they could found. The Sunderland Burns Association, rather closer to home than those discussed above, originally admitted ‘all lovers of Burns irrespective of their nationality’ to their dinners, before restricting membership to Scots only, before finally opening membership to anyone who was an ‘admirer’ of the Bard.<sup>151</sup> These studies demonstrate how toasts, speeches, and rituals are not simply empty rhetoric. They hold power, and in their own way were important tools for shaping the views of those within a community or association, and even those from outside.

On a transnational scale, too, associational dinners were valuable tools for networking and practicing politics. Numerous associations, for example, sought to wield influence over Anglo-American relations in the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>152</sup> One such body—the International Magna Charta Day Association—aimed to grow ‘anglo-saxon bonds’ in order to strengthen the Anglo-Saxon relationship, by,

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<sup>148</sup> Tanja Bueltmann, ‘“The Image of Scotland which We Cherish in Our Hearts”: Burns Anniversary Celebrations in Colonial Otago’, *Immigrants and Minorities*, 30, 1 (2012), p.90.

<sup>149</sup> Elizabeth Buettner, ‘Haggis in the Raj: Private and Public Celebrations of Scottishness in Late Imperial India’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, Vol. LXXXI, 2, 20 (2002), pp.226-7.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p.230 and pp.233-4.

<sup>151</sup> John A. Burnett, ‘Hail Brither Scots O’ Coaly Tyne’: Networking and Identity among Scottish Migrants in the North-east of England, ca. 1860-2000’, *Immigrants and Minorities*, 25, 1 (2007), p.7.

<sup>152</sup> See, for example, Stephen Bowman, *The origin, formation and activities of the Pilgrims Society c.1895 to c.1930* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Northumbria, 2014).

as its name suggested, pushing for international recognition of Magna Charta Day.<sup>153</sup> Its methods were varied but included gaining support from important individuals by becoming ‘a forum for fine dinners and considered lectures’ where members who operated in ‘high society and had the ear of politicians, diplomats and officials’ could meet at a ‘capital society event.’ Attendees would similarly include military representatives, and guests from ‘embassies and legations.’<sup>154</sup> Once again, this provides testament to the value Associations found in the format of formal dinner for achieving their goals by providing a valuable networking space—in this case, one which could reach beyond of the bounds of a single nation.

As we shall see later, CA dinners varied from the restrictive (admitting only British guests) to the open (welcoming Asian guests), and this raises further questions about the political utility of social functions in espousing ideas that are to be carried beyond the host nation. Increasingly prominent in politics is the idea of ‘public diplomacy.’ Though the term refers to efforts by a government to influence the people of another state in order to achieve its strategic goals, ideas behind it can translate into the Associational sphere.<sup>155</sup> And while public diplomacy has many means of communication in the modern era, including radio, print, and now the internet and even twitter, earlier efforts to conduct public diplomacy would require a less technological approach.<sup>156</sup> One method to do so was for a government attempting to persuade ‘individuals within the target audience who are themselves influential in the wider community’ in order to see their ideas later spread throughout their target audience of the wider populace.<sup>157</sup> Certainly, this was something the CA pursued in their social gatherings, a number of which specifically played host to foreign dignitaries and saw discussion of political matters, both in formal speeches and informal discussion. Though not public diplomacy per se as it was not the act of the British government, this is still a useful lens through which to view social gatherings,

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<sup>153</sup> Donald M. MacRaild, Sylvia Ellis and Stephen Bowman, ‘Interdependence day and Magna Charta: James Hamilton’s public diplomacy in the Anglo-World, 1907-1940s’, *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 12, 2 (2014), p.143.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.146-8.

<sup>155</sup> For an introduction to public diplomacy see Nicholas J. Cull, *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past* (Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2009), or Justin Hart, *Empire of Ideas: The Origins of Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of U.S. Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

<sup>156</sup> Cull, *Public Diplomacy*, p.14. For the use of Twitter in modern public diplomacy see Melissa D. Dodd and Steve J. Collins, ‘Public relations message strategies and public diplomacy 2.0: An empirical analysis using Central-Eastern European and Western Embassy Twitter Accounts’, *Public Relations Review*, 43 (2017), pp.417-25.

<sup>157</sup> Cull, *Public Diplomacy*, p.12.

again emphasising their potential political power. Combined, the above theories are important, particularly within the study of the CA, as they demonstrate that formal dinners were not simply matters of performance for the sake of performance.

But another reason for hosting these gatherings and for sociability beyond networking, politics, and the simple enjoyment of the occasion has been suggested: the concept of a difficult return to the homeland, something applicable to many different groups of migrants. Using Italian returnees from America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as an example helps shed some light on this important yet understudied issue. Finding a place in the social order upon return was, for example, no straightforward undertaking. Those who failed to achieve economic success were, naturally, stigmatised on return, and often forced to relocate to a different town than their hometown. But return movements could also be complicated for those who had been successful abroad. Some envied the achievements of these returnees, and the reluctance of those who had remained in Italy to contribute to schemes devised by the returnees to better their local areas—often using money earned in abroad—only heightened tensions. As such, the returnees often chose not to socialise with those who had remained at home, viewing them as backwards and uncultured.<sup>158</sup> Similar examples can be found, too, for Polish returnees from America, many of whom began communicating with each other through a publication known as the *Ameryka Echo* because they lacked a coherent social group.<sup>159</sup> They found themselves stigmatised in society, often due to disagreements with the Polish church, a common experience for many other groups of returnees.<sup>160</sup>

Closer to our geographic area of interest, work on eighteenth-century returnees to Britain from India highlights similar adjustment problems. Of course, for those who had made great fortunes and occupied an elite position, wealth could bring huge estates, lavish lifestyles and political power, best epitomized by the returned nabobs from India.<sup>161</sup> Even for this elite, though, the return brought problems. Nabobs were widely disliked, seen as ‘effeminized’, reliant on ‘sycophantic servants’ and tainted by

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<sup>158</sup> Cinel, *The National Integration of Italian Return Migration*, pp.115-119.

<sup>159</sup> Walaszek, ‘How Could it all appear so Rosy’, pp.49-54.

<sup>160</sup> For the Polish example, see Walaszek ‘How Could it all appear so Rosy’, pp.49-54. Other, numerous examples include the stigmatisation of both Irish and Swedish migrants by the Church, with the revolutionary ideas they brought back from America perceived as a threat to the social order. See Mark Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p.163 and p.171 respectively.

<sup>161</sup> The Best Examples of this were returned planters from the West Indies, or ‘Nabobs’ returned from India. Their lavish lifestyle is discussed in Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.327.

an image of wealth attained through corruption.<sup>162</sup> Others were faced with the profound realisation that they simply could not adapt to a world which had changed greatly in their absence, and nor could they adapt to a lower social standing than they had experienced as part of an elite British minority in some colonies. No longer elevated above their social station by supposed racial superiority, a return to London or elsewhere in the UK could quickly create a feeling of being lost. Others struggled when they found they could only afford a single live-in servant in Britain, as opposed to the large numbers they had become used to in their colonial lifestyle.<sup>163</sup> Often returnees found that those back in Britain cared little for the colonies, and knew little about them.<sup>164</sup> Of particular importance with respect to the study of the CA is the fact that many of these return migrants often sought solace in socialising with like-minded returnees. This could cause at its most extreme in small enclave communities of repatriates, with notable examples including Cheltenham Spa, Bedford, seaside resort towns, and in London the area of Bayswater.<sup>165</sup> Others socialised more sporadically, through reunion dinners and membership in overseas oriented clubs and societies, early examples including the 'New England' Dining Club or the aforementioned Canada Club.<sup>166</sup> It is within this context that the foundation of the CA must also be seen.

The idea of social mixing, that is the fact that many associations recruited from a disparate social spheres, provides important further context. As has been noted, the CA represented both expatriates and settlers to some extent, and certainly the two groups did overlap. In order to fully understand the CA, then, an analysis must be undertaken to clarify to what extent each group was involved, in which locations, and whether they held converging or disparate aims, especially in terms of presenting a

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<sup>162</sup> Andrew Mackillop, 'The Highlands and the Returning Nabob: Sir Hector Munro of Novar, 1760-1807', in Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp.236-8. See also George McGilvary, 'Return of the Scottish Nabob, 1725-1833', in Mario Varricchio (ed.), *Back to Caledonia: Scottish Homecomings from the Sixteenth Century to the Present* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2012); or Jack P. Greene, 'Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution' in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire Vol II: The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp.225-6.

<sup>163</sup> This is discussed briefly in Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.330. However, a much more in depth appraisal is given in Elizabeth Buettner, "'We Don't Grow Coffee and Bananas in Clapham Junction You Know!'" pp. 302-328.

<sup>164</sup> Burke, 'Canada in Britain', p.184.

<sup>165</sup> Buettner, "'We Don't Grow Coffee and Bananas in Clapham Junction You Know!'" pp. 315.

<sup>166</sup> Burke, 'Canada in Britain', p.185; Buettner, "'We Don't Grow Coffee and Bananas in Clapham Junction You Know!'" pp. 315-6.

united political front. As Clark has noted, if the aims of disparate groups within associations were not fully resolved this could lead to increased conflict and even ‘confusion and disorder’ within an association.<sup>167</sup>

Turning to the functions of voluntary associations that existed beyond sociability and networking, there are several which the CA identified as areas in which they could operate effectively in their original objects. Two, however, came to see especially longstanding commitment and must therefore be investigated in some depth: charity and benevolence, and philanthropy, the latter specifically in education. Both, as we shall see throughout this thesis, came to occupy a substantial amount of the CA’s time and resources for extended periods, and would eventually provide some of the CA’s most notable successes and legacies. At a domestic level, the CA entered into a world where the necessity of charity and benevolence was clearly evident. Figures from 1899, contemporary to the CA, show that while the national cost of poor relief provided by the government was £11.2 million, charities in London alone received £6 million.<sup>168</sup> On a worldwide stage ethnic associations too played a key role in administering relief for fellow migrants in distress, undertaking philanthropic endeavours to support civil society at a time when poor relief systems were sparse.<sup>169</sup> This could cater for those many miles from home, or even those relatively near, with the Sunderland Burns Association keeping an active benevolent fund, despite its relatively close proximity to Scotland.<sup>170</sup> The CA, to some extent, emulated such organisations, as well as associations such as the Straits Association, who had already seen success.<sup>171</sup> The fact that it was fashionable to be philanthropic is important, as a patrician sense of responsibility developed, ‘where acts of charity were utilized to benefit’ wider groups.<sup>172</sup>

For the CA, however, the importance of charity and benevolence was compounded by a series of other factors. The Association’s position as a hub and provider of a transnational network ensured it would take a prominent position in

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<sup>167</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, p.196.

<sup>168</sup> Alan Kidd, *State, Society and the poor in Nineteenth-century England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), p.67.

<sup>169</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, chapter one.

<sup>170</sup> Burnett, ‘Hail Brither Scots O’ Coaly Tyne’, p.9

<sup>171</sup> The Straits Association was a body which functioned in many ways similarly to the CA, and held similar goals. However it had accumulated a large benevolent fund bequeathed by members. See Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee, 25 June 1889, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1

<sup>172</sup> Bueltmann and MacRaid, *The English Diaspora in North America*, p.9.



dealing with two types of appeals. The first of these were those appeals which originated in China, and were for large-scale humanitarian relief. Many of these centred around relief for flood and famines. China was seen, by the time of the CA, as a 'land of famine' and although it has been argued that this was an undeserved reputation it was enough to draw foreign groups into providing aid.<sup>173</sup> When famine did occur in the period under consideration the ability of the Chinese state to provide relief was compromised by the upheaval of the fall of the Qing Empire and the rise of warlordism, and the resultant damage to infrastructure.<sup>174</sup> Though the successes of foreign charitable aid in alleviating these problems during the first half of the twentieth century have been debated, it is accepted foreign aid played a role and due to its connections the CA became involved in a number of such appeals. Similarly, the connection the CA held to Britain and the patriotic identity this instilled in the group would see it undertake charitable work during both World Wars, contributing to the war effort very much in line with a broader trend.<sup>175</sup>

Beyond organised collective efforts, the CA also received individual appeals. The life of an expatriate could potentially be dangerous, and trade with East Asia was subject to cycles of boom and bust. Involvement in East Asia as an expatriate could, therefore, easily leave returnees destitute, or, worse, dead, with unsupported dependents at home.<sup>176</sup> We must remain aware, however, that, identifying the mechanisms behind charitable giving is an imprecise undertaking. Motivations can range from the emotional to the practical, and even to the political.<sup>177</sup> As the CA often drew a significant amount of its charitable donations from the support of its member firms, we must be prepared to view several of their benevolent schemes through the lens of corporate philanthropy.<sup>178</sup>

Strategic corporate philanthropy is not a recent concept. Articles focusing on the modern usage of such schemes have traced it as far back as at least 1870s America,

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<sup>173</sup> Bickers, *Out of China*, p.76.

<sup>174</sup> Lillian M. Li, *Fighting Famine in North China: State, Market, and Environmental Decline, 1690s-1990s* (Stanford University Press, 2007), pp.250-309; Andrew James Nathan, *A History of the China International Famine Relief Commission* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); Bickers, *Out of China*, p.76.

<sup>175</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.182.

<sup>176</sup> Bickers, 'Shanghaianders and Others', p.287.

<sup>177</sup> Kidd, State, *Society and the poor in Nineteenth-century England*, p.69.

<sup>178</sup> For an introduction to corporate philanthropy, albeit one which is centred on the USA, see Peter Frumkin, *Strategic Giving, The Art and Science of Philanthropy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). Further examples, though again centred on the USA, can also be found in Frank Koch, *The New Corporate Philanthropy: How Society and Business can Profit* (New York: Plenum Press, 1979)

when the nation's largest railroads attempted to alleviate a shortage of crew members by donations to urban YMCAs.<sup>179</sup> In the later twentieth century, however, many American companies moved away from such donations, fearing they could be seen as 'self-dealing' and chose instead to make donations to unlinked causes.<sup>180</sup> Many American firms, too, faced the question of whether giving charitable donations was the correct course of action when their main responsibility was to maximise profit for shareholders.<sup>181</sup> For a considerable number of the British firms who supported the CA, this was less of an issue. British firms in East Asia were more likely to be family controlled, with ownership in the hands of a small number of partners rather than a joint-stock company, and were therefore able to operate in this area with greater freedom. Jardine Matheson, for example, only became a private limited company in 1906, and a public limited company in 1963.<sup>182</sup> Dodwells and Swires became PLC's in 1899 and 1914, respectively.<sup>183</sup> Their donations, as we shall see, were often not purely altruistic. They attempted to solve specific problems related to East Asian trade, often related to improving corporate image, although we must remember a business motivation behind giving does not necessarily have to mean an absence of benevolent intentions, nor does it devalue the support it gives to those in need.<sup>184</sup>

Why these firms would give under the banner of the CA rather than as individual firms also requires consideration, and, as we shall see, in some cases they did not. However, one suggested motivation for giving via an independent third party is to counter the 'free rider' problem inherent in corporate philanthropy. In its most basic form, the free rider problem arises when a single corporate body donates to a scheme of some kind to gain a tangible benefit, and in doing so also creates a similar benefit for competitors, which they then exploit despite having had no input into the

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<sup>179</sup> Richard I. Morris and Daniel A. Biederman, 'How to give away money intelligently', *Harvard Business Review* (November-December 1985), p.152.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer, 'The Competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy', *Harvard Business Review* (December 2002), pp.5-6; Joe M. Rick Jr. and Jacqueline A. Williams, 'Strategic Corporate Philanthropy: Addressing Frontline Talent Needs Through an Educational Giving Program', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 60 (2005), pp.148-9.

<sup>182</sup> Alan Reid, 'The Steel Frame' in Maggie Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books ltd., 1982), p.42.

<sup>183</sup> Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, p.53.

<sup>184</sup> Porter and Kramer, 'The Competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy', p.16. For a general, if modern, insight into corporate philanthropy to improve a company's image see P. Rajan Varadarajan and Anil Menon, 'Cause Related Marketing: A Coalignment of Marketing Strategy and Corporate Philanthropy' *Journal of Marketing*, 52, 3 (1988), pp.58-74.

original scheme.<sup>185</sup> In the case of the CA, for example, a large donation from a single company to a charitable scheme in China would potentially boost the image of the entire British trade. This problem could be countered by the CA's role as a third party, which operated with a transparency common to voluntary associations—publishing lists of donors, for example—allowing firms to be sure that competitors were giving equally to schemes the CA chose to support.

It was these potential benefits which would also see the CA become a body through which a number of educational schemes were operated. Management materials focusing on corporate philanthropy have noted that giving to educational schemes can be a cost effective method of developing a required skillset amongst employees or even society more widely, whilst also improving the image of a company.<sup>186</sup> In such cases, the free rider problem becomes exacerbated further as an employee trained under such a scheme would have valuable skills. Were they to then be employed by a rival company, this would damage relations and, effectively, mean a wasted investment. Consequently, undertaking such schemes via a third party, such as the CA, offers a chance for competitors to fund the scheme equally, and for all to benefit.<sup>187</sup> This would ensure that any co-operation built by the firms who backed the CA would not be damaged in the event of such a scheme being undertaken. More immediately, co-operation also ensures that the cost of schemes is shared, and even allows for firms to undertake larger, more visible and effective schemes than they could operating alone.<sup>188</sup>

Beyond this, education and charitable efforts which extended in reach to the Chinese population held the aforementioned potential benefit of improving the image of British firms in China, and even potentially improving relations between Britain and China as nations. Examples are readily available of the U.S. government seeking educational exchanges or supporting philanthropic or charitable endeavours to do so, and are often referred to in terms of 'public diplomacy' or 'cultural diplomacy', deploying cultural affairs to pursue foreign policy objectives.<sup>189</sup> Pertinent here, too, is that the British government would deploy similar methods in China in the later years

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<sup>185</sup> Porter and Kramer, 'The Competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy', p.11.

<sup>186</sup> Rick and Williams, 'Strategic Corporate Philanthropy: Addressing Frontline Talent Needs Through an Educational Giving Program', p.150.

<sup>187</sup> John Field, *Social Capital* (Second Edition, Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), p.24.

<sup>188</sup> Morris and Biederman, 'How to give away money intelligently', p.158.

<sup>189</sup> Hart, *Empire of Ideas*.

covered in this study.<sup>190</sup> That the use of such methods to achieve these aims could expand beyond the government and see them become tools of voluntary associations which held links and consciously sought to work with government is something investigated later in this work. These factors combined to ensure the CA would hold a prominent role in leading the development of several educational schemes. The form these schemes took and the individual motivations behind them will be discussed in greater depth later in the thesis.

A final development in the history of voluntary associations worth noting is that, towards the end of the period studied by both Morris and Clark, voluntary associations increasingly began to seek government support for their activities, either through funding or policy formation.<sup>191</sup> Indeed, this was perhaps not surprising as voluntary associations, most notably benefit and mutual aid societies, had, for some time, been performing a quasi-governmental role in the relief of the poor and sick.<sup>192</sup> Further than this, the exertion of political pressure has also been noted as one of the key driving mechanisms behind the development of associations, as they often sought to increase in size to maximise their political influence.<sup>193</sup> Voluntary associations founded specifically to deal with immigrants have too, specifically, been noted to be political on occasion, where the political opportunity structure of the host nation would allow this.<sup>194</sup> This clear change saw lines between pure political pressure groups and previously apolitical voluntary associations become increasingly blurred. It is to this impartation of political pressure and its implications for this study that we must now turn.

### **Political pressure groups and their involvement in China**

The CA itself was ostensibly formed to take up the role of lobbying the British government with regards to its policy on China. This being so, several questions must be considered. First, what are the specific nuances of the development and impact of these groups in the British political system? Secondly, why and when did returned

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<sup>190</sup> Bickers, *Out of China*, p.257.

<sup>191</sup> Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites', p. 117.

<sup>192</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.369-71.

<sup>193</sup> For American associations, this would involve ensuring a wide geographical spread to influence as many elected legislators as possible. See Jocelyn Elise Crowley and Theda Skocpol, 'The Rush to Organize: Explaining Associational Formation in the United States, 1860's-1920's', *American Journal of Political Science*, 45, 4 (2001), p.814.

<sup>194</sup> Tanja Bueltmann and Donald M. MacRaild, 'Globalizing St George: English associations in the Anglo-world to the 1930s', *Journal of Global History*, 7 (2012), pp.79-105.

expatriates become involved with such groups? Thirdly, were there specific groups who, as the forerunners of the CA, influenced the way in which the Association would act? Finally, are there any specific methodological considerations which must be made when studying such groups?

Turning, first, to definition, Jeremy J. Richardson notes that at least 20 terms can be found to describe organizations pressing governments to act. As such, Richardson offers a useful working definition as ‘any group which articulates demands that the political authorities in the political system or subsystem should make an authoritative allocation’ yet without seeking to occupy the position of authority (government) themselves.<sup>195</sup> The CA, as a body independent of government which sought to influence policy, fits comfortably. Such groups, Richardson further argues, are very important to the political process as politics itself is not a level playing field, and these groups will press for decisions that will harm some whilst benefiting others. Indeed, Richardson suggests that ‘in practice, public policy in all societies is decided as a result of complex and often unpredictable interplay between governmental institutions, non-governmental institutions... and conventional membership groups.’ Ultimately, government policy is achieved by negotiation and compromise with groups outside of the formal sphere of government, groups such as the CA.<sup>196</sup> Richardson also argues that the importance of such groups is understated. Indeed, the ‘co-optation of groups into the policy process’ is seen by some as of much greater importance to the outcome of policy formation than the formal election process.<sup>197</sup> Certainly, when considered against the available historical examples discussed later, it is clear that in imperial policy formation, at least, political pressure groups had the potential to be influential, not least in affecting the China trade.

Key in appraising how the CA attempted to emulate these successes is the awareness that for these groups there are numerous methods of applying pressure to government, and also many points to which it can be applied, including MPs, Parliament as a whole, or government departments and ministries, amongst others, and that little headway will be made in understanding an association’s attempts to exert influence without first establishing what pressure point it has chosen.<sup>198</sup> Recent work,

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<sup>195</sup> Jeremy J. Richardson, ‘Introduction: Pressure Groups and Government’ in Jeremy J. Richardson (ed.), *Pressure Groups* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.1.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.11-12.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

though focusing on a later period than that under consideration here, has placed much importance upon the ideas of political pressure groups—also referred to as ‘organized interests’—choosing points of contact consciously. Two categories are prominent; those that are termed ‘insider’ interests successfully open channels of communication with government, and those who struggle to form links within government are termed ‘outsider’ interests.

In exchange for the support they can provide to government, often in the form of technical expertise, insider interests can be co-opted into the policy creation process as part of a ‘policy community.’ Often, strong links will be built with civil servants or a particular government department rather than with MPs or government-appointed ministers, who are only serving a temporary term.<sup>199</sup> Efforts will also be made to ensure that the membership of the association acting as a link between the government and the interests will contain a large percentage of the sector (be this firms or individuals) that they represent.<sup>200</sup> Such insider interests are typically also ‘moderate’ and ‘responsible’, and do not criticise the government in public, instead helping to formulate policy using their own expertise and a process of negotiation.<sup>201</sup>

Outsider interests, conversely, are not given the chance to be co-opted into the policy development process. They do not operate from such a strong base as insiders, and so are left to seek channels of influence outside of the inner workings of government. This, typically, leads to the use of the media to push campaigns, or through connections to backbench MP’s.<sup>202</sup> How the CA fits against this framework of insider/outsider interests will be considered in chapter three of this thesis, and will show that such distinctions were certainly well-developed, if albeit not given such terminology, in the lifetime of the CA.

In terms of the origins of pressure groups, scholars agree that Britain was the earliest example of the pluralistic system of government required for these groups to flourish, though several time-scales have been suggested.<sup>203</sup> For Richardson, such a system began in the eighteenth century, and was well established by the Victorian era

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<sup>199</sup> Peter Dorey, *Policy Making in Britain: An Introduction* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), specifically chapters three and four; W.N. Coxall, *Pressure Groups in British Politics* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), pp.63-4.

<sup>200</sup> Duncan Watts, *Pressure Groups* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p.49.

<sup>201</sup> Dorey, *Policy Making in Britain*, pp.125-32.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>203</sup> Jeremy J. Richardson, ‘Interest Group Behaviour in Britain: Continuity and Change’ in Jeremy J. Richardson (ed.), *Pressure Groups* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.86-88. See also Graham Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, pp.1-11.

with policy since early Victorian times only been regarded as ‘good’ when it proves acceptable to such interest groups. Furthermore, Richardson notes, such policies often become entrenched and unlikely to witness any form of change, even following a change of government.<sup>204</sup> Morris argues for a slightly later date, with the mid-nineteenth century representing a key turning point for domestic voluntary associations as they began to pursue pressure politics as a method of achieving influence.<sup>205</sup> However, the most comprehensive historical study of such groups suggests a much earlier date, with Graham Wootton dating the origin to Elizabethan times—though he begins his study in 1720—and as inseparable from the world of the British Empire.<sup>206</sup>

Alongside the importance of Empire, the involvement of migrants was key in such groups. This was seen most prominently with the East India Company, which exerted political pressure to maintain its trade monopoly. By the first decade of the eighteenth century, the Company was large enough to be providing short term credit to the British government itself in exchange for favourable policy formation.<sup>207</sup> The earliest grouping of returned expatriates who sought political influence, and very much akin to the CA’s aims, was The Planters Club. An association of absentee planters from the West Indies, the Club used its members’ new found lifestyles as country gentlemen to enter Parliament and support their interests. By 1743 the Club could boast the successful defeat of a bill designed to increase the duty on imported sugar, and in 1763 saw their views clearly represented in the Peace of Paris.<sup>208</sup> Turning eastwards once again, Wootton notes returnees from India soon adopted similar methods. Despite the East India Company’s wider struggles, and general public dislike for these returnees themselves, Wootton notes they managed to move quickly into Parliament, increasing the seats they held from 6 in 1762 to 36 by 1784. Using this influence returned expatriates from India proved the worth of the political pressure group and saw the East India Company monopoly over eastern trade extended well beyond its useful lifespan.<sup>209</sup> Members of the Canada Club would also lobby

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<sup>204</sup> Jeremy J. Richardson, 'Interest Group Behaviour in Britain', pp.86-88.

<sup>205</sup> Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites', p. 117.

<sup>206</sup> Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, pp.13-14.

<sup>207</sup> Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, pp.16-17. See also, Tilman W. Nechtman, *Nabobs: Empire and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p.18.

<sup>208</sup> Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, pp.18-27.

<sup>209</sup> Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, pp. 35-39; Mackillop, 'The Highlands and the Returning Nabob: Sir Hector Munro of Novar, 1760-1807', pp.242-6.

politically, and though this was undertaken individually the club itself likely provided the network through which members organised themselves.<sup>210</sup> A handful of individual returnees from Australia would also attempt to gain political power, such as Henniker Heaton who gained the moniker of ‘the member for Australia’ in the commons.<sup>211</sup> Yet while these groups are indicative, they were not the same as the CA. Many sought parliamentary means to gain influence and this was, as we shall see, a method the CA preferred to avoid. What these groups do, however, is highlight a clear trajectory of returnees attempting to gain influence to support a trade in which they held a continued interest. Equally as important, too, are other groups, including those not necessarily comprised of return migrants, who attempted to influence the China trade as forerunners of the CA.

The first pressure groups interested in China began to appear in 1812, with the East India Company charter which granted it a monopoly over the trade due to expire at the beginning of March 1814. A ‘Glasgow East India Association’ came together with other local groups across Britain, including prominent Liverpool interests, to prepare a petition opposing the renewal of the charter and present it to parliament. Alongside this, the group lobbied actively in London. Although they were ultimately unsuccessful and the East India Company charter was renewed, they nonetheless won a victory in allowing the import trade from Asia to pass through British outports, rather than simply London as had been the previous arrangement.<sup>212</sup> Other scholars have noted the use of repeated petitions and combination between provincial interests in the years that followed this defeat. This was undertaken via the formation of bodies such as the Liverpool East India Association and the East India Trade Committee of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, which continued to press for the removal of the East India Company monopoly.<sup>213</sup> This marked the start of a continued drive by private interests to influence British policy in China, and also the beginning of the formation of more permanent lobbying associations and bodies, a development Webster has

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<sup>210</sup> Burke, ‘Canada in Britain’, p.193

<sup>211</sup> Richards, ‘Running home from Australia’, pp.83-4.

<sup>212</sup> Yukihiisa Kumagai, *Breaking into the Monopoly: Provincial Merchants and Manufacturers’ Campaigns for Access to the Asian Market, 1790-1833* (Boston: Brill Press, 2013). See chapter two for Glasgow interests, and chapter four for Liverpool.

<sup>213</sup> Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, pp.54. Ian Nish, ‘British Mercantile Cooperation in the Indo-China Trade from the End of the East India Company’s Trading Monopoly’ in *Collected Writings of Ian Nish: Part II; Japan, Russia and East Asia*, (Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), p.30.



noted as the point of ‘radical change in the political landscape of Asian commerce’.<sup>214</sup>

Still, outside of these permanent groups, others continued to lobby on an ad-hoc basis. Indeed, it has been argued that the First Opium War was in fact conducted largely against the aims of the British government, which saw negotiated diplomatic relations with China as a preferable stance. British interests in Canton had developed, in the 1830’s, into two distinct groups, the ‘warlike’ and ‘pacific’ parties, with the former calling for war in order to expand the China trade, and the latter preferring peace.<sup>215</sup> Only when influenced by the machinations of William Jardine of Jardine Matheson, part of the ‘warlike’ party and now returned to London and conducting a vigorous publishing and publicity campaign was war accepted as the route forward.<sup>216</sup> Once the war had begun, Jardine offered advice to Palmerston privately, in the form of charts and local knowledge, in order to aid the war effort.<sup>217</sup> Jardine was certainly no stranger to encouraging tension between the British government and the Chinese Empire. While Lord Napier was superintendent of the trade in Canton, the two dined together, saw each other frequently, and even ‘gradually came to think alike’. Eventually Jardine brought Napier to ‘his side of the policy debate’ and in doing so he contributed significantly to causing the ‘Napier Fizzle.’<sup>218</sup>

Later nineteenth century efforts saw a variety of methods employed. These included an unsuccessful attempt by a combination of the Shanghai and Hongkong Chambers of Commerce, twinned with Jardine Matheson, to oppose transit duty changes.<sup>219</sup> Other developments in the China trade which were opposed by the mercantile community saw efforts to unite the home chambers of commerce to create a combined opposition.<sup>220</sup> A key victory for the community came with the non-ratification of the Alcock Convention. In opposition to ratification a group was formed consisting of 34 Members of Parliament, several ‘city magnates’ and ‘influential

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<sup>214</sup> Nish, ‘British Mercantile Cooperation in the Indo-China Trade, p.31; Webster, ‘The Development of British Commercial and Political Networks in the Straits Settlements’, p.913.

<sup>215</sup> Song-Chuan Chen, *Merchants of War and Peace: British Knowledge of China in the Making of the Opium War* (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2017), specifically chapter two.

<sup>216</sup> Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, p.79; Chen, *Merchants of War and Peace*, pp.118-122

<sup>217</sup> Although some of the advice was disregarded by the Admiralty, some appeared in the instructions given to the British Forces. See Peter Ward Fay ‘The Opening of China’ in Maggie Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books Ltd., 1982), p.72.

<sup>218</sup> Richard G. Grace, *Opium and Empire: The lives and careers of William Jardine and James Matheson* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014), p.196.

<sup>219</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.23.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, p.43.

merchants' led by Hugh Matheson and Charles Magniac who visited Lord Clarendon in order to press their view. Successful in swaying press and public opinion, the group achieved their goal, though they failed to alter the overall stance of the Foreign Office.<sup>221</sup> Again, this demonstrates the continuation a solid history of combinations of business interests attempting to influence Sino-British pressure politics, which mirrored those that appeared throughout Asia.<sup>222</sup>

This, then, is the history of the groups which provided a basis for the political activities of the CA. A succession of organisations and individuals acted with varying success to influence British policy in China. Various methods were used, including gaining seats in Parliament, co-opting MP's into associations with a broad base, or even bypassing MP's and passing concerns directly to government departments. As pursued by early China returnees, public opinion could be brought to bear on government, while others attempted to unite the Board of Trade and Chambers of Commerce behind their cause. Uniting both the voices from the periphery of Empire and those of the domestic chambers was important, and may hint at a reason for the establishment of the branch organisation system of the CA itself.<sup>223</sup>

While these foundations and links offered the CA and similar bodies potential to gain influence it is important, however, to be very clear about approaches and methodology when studying pressure, or interest, groups. First, annual reports of associations can be prone to overstating achievements to members. Secondly, negotiations with government often go unrecorded due to confidentiality; a similar point can also be made for the hidden political pressure exerted informally at social events or through private networks. Finally, documents can be hard to acquire. This especially so when businesses are involved, which exacerbates the linked problem of determining the level of influence businesses hold in associations.<sup>224</sup>

Also worthy of consideration is the role of MPs, if they are present in a political pressure group. Wootton argues that, when present, MPs should not be considered as forming the groups, but instead as tools of the pressure group.<sup>225</sup> Such a view, however, must be nuanced to an extent. Thomas Sutherland or William Keswick, for example,

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<sup>221</sup> Ibid., pp.76-83.

<sup>222</sup> See, for example, Anthony Webster, *Gentlemen Capitalists: British imperialism in South East Asia, 1770-1890* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), pp.254-6.

<sup>223</sup> Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, p.76.

<sup>224</sup> Davis 'Some Neglected Aspects of British Pressure Groups', p.44-46

<sup>225</sup> Wootton, *Pressure Groups in Britain*, p.8.

were both CA founders and active members, with continuing business interests in East Asia, whilst concurrently MP's. All of these problems must be held in mind whilst studying such bodies, and attempts made to alleviate them where possible.<sup>226</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The CA did not exist in a vacuum, and nor could its development have occurred in one. It followed a well-trodden path of political pressure groups and voluntary associations, long-rooted historically both in the formal and informal British Empire, and more specifically the context of Sino-British relations. As part of a matrix of a growing number of British associations concerned with Asia, it embraced a wide range of activities that reflected the aims of British residents in China and those of the firms for which many of them worked. Likewise, the CA was not alone connecting metropole to periphery through returnees, operating alongside such groups as the Straits Association. Members of such associations could be linked by political or business aims, but also by personal connections. Formal social gatherings therefore became an important networking tool, with sociability also offering a potential way to deal with the difficult return and loss in status experienced by many returnees. Sociability was even further a means to retain a unified identity and establish a united political front. The CA's more diverse activities, such as charitable collections and education schemes, similarly offered the potential to play multiple roles, supporting those in need whilst also offering strategic benefits for member firms. Deeper investigation will grant a greater level of understanding of how such disparate goals could co-exist within a single Association, clarifying the reasons for its existence and the roles it undertook, while concurrently contributing to burgeoning fields of study on return migrants and expatriates.

Against a background of competing and disparate groups seeking to direct British policy in China, too, a study of the CA will offer insight. Association policy was, ultimately, directed from the metropole, but divisions were visible at time where interests clashed with periphery interest of expatriates and settlers. This was, as will be examined, the result of diverse membership representing finance, services, trade and settler interests, and therefore numerous potential origins of policy formation. As a meeting point for all of these groups, the CA offers a fascinating lens into group

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<sup>226</sup> See appendix A for further information on Thomas Sutherland and William Keswick

dynamics and the mechanics behind holding and retaining influence within voluntary bodies, as well as how such groups interacted with each other, especially in light of the importance of informal networking often noted in such groups. Indeed, this also offers an opportunity to appraise the theory espoused that such groups, ostensibly subscriber democracies, were prone to becoming oligarchic, and dominated by the elites at the head of these groups. In particular, it will give a chance to ascertain how an oligarchy could be created and controlled, and ultimately how it was utilised. Detailed scrutiny of the CA's membership, and ascertaining who held positions of power in the Association, is, therefore, crucial.

Once this is ascertained, of course, it will leave a key question to be answered, alongside the investigations into sociability, charity and benevolence. Simply: to what end was this power used? As we have seen earlier, British policy and identity in China in the period under consideration underwent considerable change, from one of seeking concessions and maintaining racial boundaries to one of co-operation with Chinese interests and partners, and the removal of extraterritoriality and unequal treaties. How, we must ask, did the CA support—or oppose—such changes, and ultimately, were they a successful Association in doing so? In order to this, we must first turn, however, to an analysis of the establishment and membership of the CA.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE CHINA ASSOCIATION: FOUNDATION, MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANISATION**

In April 1889 a group of returned expatriates from China, known collectively by the moniker of ‘Old China Hands’ met for a social gathering at the Thatched House Club in London. Although talk was originally of nostalgic memories of time spent in China and East Asia, discussion soon turned to political matters and the state of the China trade. Discontent with the current direction of both, leading China merchant Sir Alfred Dent had proposed, as we saw at the beginning of the thesis, to form an organisation to address these matters.<sup>1</sup> With the suggestion meeting with ‘very general approval’ Dent wrote to those who had expressed interest to secure ‘definite promises of support’, either from individuals or firms they represented. The entrance fee and annual subscription were both proposed to be set at one guinea, though this would be confirmed upon the first meeting of a general committee.<sup>2</sup>

This was swiftly followed on 11 April 1889 by ‘a meeting of Gentlemen interested in the China trade’ convened at the offices of the P&O Company. At the invitation of Alfred Dent, Sir Thomas Wade, former British diplomat and Sinologist, proposed the formation of the CA, seconded by David Mclean, manager of the London branch of the HSBC.<sup>3</sup> Further resolutions passed at the meeting catered for the election of a general committee, given the power to elect an executive committee and officers as required for the first year of the Association’s existence, as well as to draft the rules, objects and regulations of the CA. Membership was granted to all those who had replied to Alfred Dent’s letter of the previous month, and the general committee were given the power to elect new members by invitation. In his closing remarks, Dent outlined what he saw as the primary goal of the Association—to ‘maintain British

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<sup>1</sup> The Inaugural China Dinner: Proposed China Association, 4 March 1889, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>2</sup> Proposed China Association, 19 March 1889 Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

<sup>3</sup> Further discussion and information relating to both of these men, alongside other key CA founders, is to be found in Appendix A.

interests and British trade' in China, in co-operation with two key official bodies, the Foreign Office and HM Minister in Peking.<sup>4</sup>

### **The objects of the Association**

Although they viewed this relationship as vitally important the CA was not to be overly defined by it, and the objects put in place by the first General Committee were guidelines, worded to ensure they would not restrict the CA in the future. Overall, there were three key aims: (1) to give a political voice to the East Asian mercantile community; (2) to provide a social network for men who had spent time in Asia after their return; (3) to give charity to causes connected to East Asia. Underpinning all of these was Dent's fundamental goal to improve the state of British trade with East Asia.<sup>5</sup>

The first of these aims was for the CA to become a representative voice for the British mercantile community in East Asia through which this community could express its opinion regarding the current state of 'social, political and commercial relations with the Chinese.' This was intended to be accomplished through building strong relations with government departments, predominantly the Foreign Office and legation in Peking, but also through other political connections. Chapter three focuses on the nuances of this relationship, the methods used to strengthen it, as well as the CA's rejection of other methods, such as influencing the wider public and public criticism of government.<sup>6</sup>

Alongside these political contacts, chapter three also examines sociability and the maintenance and promotion of social networks as the second of the CA's critical pillars. Sociability is a key facet of voluntary associations and this was to be promoted by holding 'periodical assemblages...with a view to the promotion and cultivation of friendly feelings amongst Members of the Association.' The benefit of this was twofold. First, it allowed the maintenance of relationships forged in East Asia, which

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<sup>4</sup> Formation of the China Association, 11 April 1889, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>5</sup> All information relating to these objects, rules and regulations as discussed below was drawn from the copy retained by Association chairman William Keswick. See The China Association (established 1889) Objects, rules and regulations, Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4. Although taking the form of a printed booklet this was in some cases altered by hand, which, where relevant, will be noted below.

<sup>6</sup> A policy of attempting to influence the wider public was largely rejected by the Association. This had led to the creation of a competing 'China League' and also caused tension with Association branches. Both are discussed later in this chapter.

were often key to some returnees who struggled with readjusting to life in Britain. However, the wording of the object also suggests that through such gatherings the CA aimed to strengthen itself, and the overall China mercantile community, by the ‘cultivation’ of ‘friendly feelings’—and perhaps ultimately too, the cultivation of commercial cooperation—between men who were often rivals in business. Cooperation would be of utmost importance if the Association was to produce a coherent voice and viewpoint to take into negotiations with government as a pressure group. Beyond this, invitations to social events would be extended to political figures, widening this social network, and accounting for the CA’s social and political functions sitting side by side in chapter three of the thesis.

Like many other voluntary associations the CA was also committed to charitable work. They set out, as their third major object, to ‘undertake, superintend, administer and contribute to any charitable or benevolent fund’ which would benefit ‘deserving persons’ who were connected in some way to East Asia. Further aims were to contribute to or assist ‘any [wider] charitable or benevolent institution or undertaking.’<sup>7</sup> This resulted in the CA’s involvement in diverse benevolent endeavours, both abroad and at home, important examples of which are investigated in chapter four.

What the objects finally made clear at the outset was that the CA was formed to be a body for the promotion of British business in East Asia: ‘Trade, commerce, shipping and manufactures’ of the United Kingdom, and also of ‘India and the Colonies’ with ‘China, Hongkong and Japan’ were to be ‘promoted and protected.’<sup>8</sup> To ensure the Association’s scope was not limited, the CA hoped to do ‘all such things as may be conducive’ to improve the fortunes of ‘trade, commerce or manufactures’ in East Asia. Many of the Association’s activities discussed throughout the thesis, including charitable manoeuvres, social and political undertakings, are best viewed through this wider lens of the promotion of trade. A number of targeted schemes undertaken for this purpose—focusing on education—are grouped together and discussed alongside charitable efforts in chapter four. It was also for such purposes

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, The St. Georges Society discussed in Gillian I. Lietch, ‘The Importance of Being English: English Ethnic Culture in Montreal, c.1800-1864’ in Tanja Buelmann, David Gleeson and Don MacRaild, (eds.), *Locating the English Diaspora, 1500-2010* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), pp. 113-115. An Earlier London based example saw poor relief undertaken by raising funds through feasts, as discussed in Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800*, p.50.

<sup>8</sup> Hongkong and Japan were added to this copy of the regulations by hand, suggesting they may have been only considered slightly after the foundation of the body.

that the CA set out to collect ‘statistics and other information’ relating to trade, commerce, shipping and manufactures, an endeavour that resulted in the CA collecting a sizeable library of periodicals, government papers, books and other material related to East Asia, which was accessible to members at the Association’s offices.<sup>9</sup> To circulate this material had been the Association’s original intention, however this was struck out by hand in Keswick’s copy of the regulations, suggesting a change of heart when these objects were first reviewed, although later circulars and bulletins to committee members did serve to transmit key information to the men serving on these bodies in advance of meetings.

Overall, these were wide ranging goals for the CA to set itself. Yet it readily engaged with these challenges, allowing the Association the potential to engage in an almost unlimited number of areas. And, indeed, it would commit itself to a diverse range of projects and develop a matching range of interests and commitments. Through all of these it sought to bolster its main goal: to benefit the British mercantile community linked to East Asia.

### **Individual membership**

In order to understand the operations of the CA fully, we need to know more about its membership. The motivations for the Association to act must, after all, have originated from within this membership, and it is only through a detailed study that we can ascertain exactly where influence to direct the Association lay. Pelcovits has described the CA as being led by ‘representatives of the larger China Houses’, the ‘spokesmen for vested interests in Commerce, shipping, utilities and banking in the Far East.’ Alongside these were Members of Parliament from the ‘China Bloc’ and ‘retired colonial and military officials.’<sup>10</sup> This fits relatively well the analysis presented below, and also against membership patterns of East Asian Voluntary Associations, establishing that these men were inclined to join such bodies.<sup>11</sup> However, by exploiting a much more diverse source base it is possible to make further investigation into not only the leaders, but also the ordinary members of the CA. By understanding their

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<sup>9</sup> By 1946 the Associations library had become so large that the CA was forced to dispose of several of its collections. Material of unique nature was to be given to libraries, with members informed where these materials could, in future, be consulted. Circular to the Executive and General Committee, 21 January 1946, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1946, CHAS/MCP/46, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>10</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.159.

<sup>11</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.174.



experiences of China and how well-linked they remained to East Asia we can gain a much more nuanced understanding of the inner workings and aims of the CA, outlining who held power within the body, and the varied benefits members sought by joining the Association.

Forms of individual membership comprised of ordinary, honorary and corresponding membership. Ordinary members were to be ‘either connected with China, or interested in this Association in a manner sufficiently close to satisfy the General committee of the Association.’ Past residence in China was not a specific requirement—a fact that ensured that London based employees of firms with interests in China could join—though a large percentage of members had, at some point, resided in China. Honorary membership was to be granted to ‘those who have distinguished themselves in connection with China.’ Finally, corresponding members were to be ‘Gentlemen’, chosen by the Association and resident in the United Kingdom or abroad, who were willing to provide the Association with ‘information or otherwise.’ Only ordinary members were to pay subscriptions—at a rate of £1.1.0 per year—and their membership would be terminated if they fell one year into arrears. Honorary and corresponding members saw this fee waived, potentially due to the gravitas they could lend the Association and the valuable role they could play in creating an information network, respectively.<sup>12</sup> Alongside this, membership was offered to firms as corporate entities from 1897 and yearly subscriptions from firms (of varying sizes) quickly became the CA’s major source of funding. Overall, three areas offer scope for investigation; the Association’s wider membership, the men who served as officers and on the CA’s committees, and finally, the firms who backed the Association financially.

Of the surviving membership lists of the CA, the list of the founding members presents the most accessible route into the Association.<sup>13</sup> By making use of directories which listed foreign residents in China and the wider Far East, alongside other sources such as lists of land renters in Shanghai, almanacs, newspapers and secondary texts it is possible to trace these men as they progressed through their careers and lives in

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<sup>12</sup> Corresponding membership was not unique to the CA. Indeed, Some Associations consisted purely of corresponding members and acted as information exchanges. These included continental and antiquarian societies, amongst others. See Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.47-49.

<sup>13</sup> Later membership lists are harder to analyse as the sources of data for establishing biographies of members, largely China Coast directories, are available in greater numbers for the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as opposed to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

China.<sup>14</sup> The information recovered from these sources has been compiled into an alphabetical list which can be found in appendix A of this work. It must be stressed that these sources have their limitations. Names are, on occasion, misspelled, or potentially omitted from directories. Some members must be omitted from calculations relating to the length of time members spent in China as their entire career is not recorded, having resided in a place not included in most directories. As such, their inclusion would unfairly weight the data. Alongside this, men were sometimes recorded as absent (on leave in Britain) despite having returned permanently from East Asia; these men's careers are regarded as having ended the final time they left China, not the final time they are recorded in the directories. As there are some significant gaps in the years for which directories are available, it is also possible these men led longer careers in China, or even achieved a higher posting within the companies they worked for than those recorded here. It is also critical to note that the data used is the highest provable level of employment these men held before, or at the time of, the establishment of the CA. It does not account for later career developments, for example those of O.E. and H.G. Hayter, who held relatively lowly positions in their early China careers for HM government and Wilkinson and Co., respectively. At some point they began their own mercantile firm which continued until 1910. However, as with others, we cannot ascertain this had begun before the founding of the C.A., and so this is omitted from the analysis of their careers. It does, however, prove that they retained business links to China throughout this period, and so is included in later analysis of whether men were still actively linked to the East Asian trade or not. In that sense such information is not lost to the analysis. One final consideration is that these men sometimes held roles for more than one company. To choose but one example, Edward Ford Duncanson was, at the time of the CA's foundation, active within the China trade as the head and leading partner of Gibb, Livingstone & Co. Concurrently, he was also a director on the HSBC advisory board in London, and director for the P&O (filling the vacancy reserved for a man with personal experience

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<sup>14</sup> For the Sources used to create this data see the section of the bibliography titled 'Directories and Foreign Resident Lists.' Most are available online, either hosted at, or linked to, from the University of Bristol Chinese Maritime Customs Project, available at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/history/customs/ancestors/directories.html> (last accessed 29 October 2018) or the national library of Singapore, available online at <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/printheritage> (last accessed 29 October 2018).

of the opium trade).<sup>15</sup> For analysis, these men are considered as members of the company in which they held capital (where it is possible to ascertain this) as opposed to those for which they were directors. Despite such caveats, and in their full recognition, it is possible to establish useful short biographies for 105 of the original 111 members of the CA. By doing so, it becomes possible to classify these members into smaller groups and draw important conclusions that affect our understanding of the CA as a whole.

Overall, 98 per cent of the members of the CA who are able to be traced can be placed into four distinct employment groups. Merchants involved in trading (with the caveat that a number of these trading firms had evolved to encompass other interests such as shipping); those involved in financial services or pure shipping firms; men who had been, or remained in, the employ of HM government; and, finally, a number who offered skilled services which were necessary for these other groups to function in East Asia. These subgroups, ultimately, conform neatly with the types of employment we would expect to find from expatriates sojourning in a country, always intending to return to Britain, be it later in their careers or to retire.<sup>16</sup>

### *Merchants*

Numerically, the most prominent group amongst the CA's membership were merchants. Of the 105 members for whom it is possible to produce more detailed biographies, 69 had a predominantly mercantile background. It is important to note here that the term merchant has, in this case, a wide definition, ranging from men who were, for example, clerks at a small Shanghai importers, to those who headed multinational firms which involved themselves in activities from trading through to shipping, mining and the construction of railways.

Despite such wide ranging definitions, only two sub-categories are listed in the directories. Nine members never rose above the rank of 'Clerk' and statistically had a much shorter career in China than the average member of the Association, leaving before they progressed higher up the company hierarchy. Such a short stay, and low position in a company, also potentially accounts for their relative scarcity within the CA. They may no longer have held commercial links to China, and were also perhaps

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<sup>15</sup> Freda, Harcourt, 'Black Gold: P&O and the Opium Trade, 1847-1914', *International Journal of Maritime History*, 6, 1 (1994), pp.26-7. For his further employment, see appendix A.

<sup>16</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.70. See also Darwin, 'Orphans of Empire', pp.332-5.

less strongly integrated into the elite social networks that, ultimately, lay behind the formation of the CA. The rank of clerk was also one which held myriad meanings which could encompass a broad range of occupations. It was a starting point for both those who never rose above a book keeper and those who were learning the ropes of the family business, essentially partners in waiting.

Unfortunately, above this early career role the directories make no distinction other than that of merchant. This was a catch-all term referring to anyone above the rank of clerk, all the way through to the head of a major firm. Indeed, William Keswick, having returned to London to run the British component of Jardine Matheson, was nonetheless referred to as a merchant in the China Directories. As such, these members have been divided in the most useful way possible; those for whom there is evidence of further progression—either through wider sources or through running an eponymous company—and those for whom no further evidence is available. When split along these lines, we find 19 men fulfilled the role of merchant, and 41 who led or were partners in firms. Amongst these firms the most notable were Jardine Matheson and Swires, the two largest British trading firms operating in China.<sup>17</sup> These merchants formed the bulk of the membership of the CA. They had sojourned in East Asia for a lengthy period of time, potentially forging strong social links, and upon their return many maintained active commercial links to it. As we shall see, the elite of these men returned to run the either London end of established firms or firms established in their own name. Whilst doing so, they remained active and important members of the CA. Census records for Hongkong show that, in 1901, Clerks outnumbered merchants by a ratio of 2.5:1, so to find this ratio reversed to a figure of 0.14:1 in the CA only reinforces that the body drew from the elite of the China Coast mercantile community.<sup>18</sup>

### *Financial services and shipping*

After merchants, the next most numerous group is comprised of those who provided key services—finance and shipping—in East Asia and multinationally, facilitating the operations of the kinds of merchants and companies previously discussed by providing a source of currency and the ships necessary to carry goods either to and from Europe,

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<sup>17</sup> Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, p.54.

<sup>18</sup> *Census of the British Empire, 1901*, pp.136-7.

or between ports in East Asia. Overall, this group encompassed 16 of the original 105 members of the CA.

Eleven of these men were bankers, of whom eight rose to be at least branch managers for various institutions. The HSBC was particularly predominant, represented by its London Branch manager David Mclean, and, joining whilst on leave in Britain, General Manager Thomas Jackson and Shanghai Branch manager Ewen Cameron.<sup>19</sup> These three men represented three quarters of the bank's leading management at the time, underlining the promise they saw in the Association for improving commercial prospects for the HSBC in China. The inclusion of John Howard Gwyther, London manager and later chairman of the Chartered Bank, ensured that the CA could claim to represent the two major financial providers in East Asia.<sup>20</sup>

Three of the original members had backgrounds in shipping. Outstanding amongst these was Thomas Sutherland, managing director and Chairman of P&O in London, who only relinquished control of the company upon his retirement in 1914.<sup>21</sup> In this capacity Sutherland, as many other prominent members of the CA, retained an active interest in China. He was joined in the CA by F.D. Barnes, the P&O's senior managing director.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, we find those who fall under the classification of insurers. Only two of the CA's founders were involved primarily in insurance. The most prominent of

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<sup>19</sup> "Sir Ewen Cameron." *Times* (London, England), 11 December 1908, p.11; For Mclean see Shizuya Nishimura, Toshio Suzuki and Ranald C. Michie, (eds.), *The Origins of International Banking in Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.107 footnote 2; and Frank H. H. King, 'McLean, David (1833–1908)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52386>, last accessed 13 October 2017).

<sup>20</sup> Frances Bostock, 'Gwyther, John Howard (1835–1921)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/48882>, last accessed 22 August 2016); Compton MacKenzie, *Realms of Silver: One Hundred Years of Banking in the East* (1954, Reprinted Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p.155.

<sup>21</sup> Alongside this Sutherland had helped found, and served as vice-chairman of the HSBC in 1865, was a director of the Suez Canal Company and also served as MP for Greenock. See Freda Harcourt, 'Sutherland, Sir Thomas (1834–1922)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36373>, last accessed 13 October 2017) and also Robert Henry Mair, *Debrett's House of Commons, and the Judicial Bench, 1886* (London: Dean and Son, 1886), p.146.

<sup>22</sup> Harcourt, 'Black Gold: P&O and the Opium Trade, 1847-1914', p.66.

these was Nathaniel J. Ede, who led the development of the Union Insurance Society of Canton.<sup>23</sup>

### *Local service providers*

The presence of the next group, those who provided local services in East Asia is, at first glance, perhaps somewhat of a surprise. When defining the groups into which the British inhabitants in China could be split those who provided local services have been considered socioeconomically closer to settlers.<sup>24</sup> Undeniably for many this is correct. However, the men under consideration here provided highly skilled services which would have brought them into contact with the expatriates described above on a regular basis, and left them with the transferable skills necessary to relocate back to Britain and find employment, if they wished. Still, their relative scarcity among the CA membership is indicative that these men were not quite of the same background and status as other members.

Indeed, only nine founding members fitted into this group. Two were doctors, perhaps well known to other CA members due to the potential dangers of the Chinese climate and thus included due to social links, although one, Dr. George Thin, held indeterminate links to the HSBC.<sup>25</sup> Contemporary texts certainly show doctors as positions of some authority in the community, with their advice on healthy living in Hongkong and Shanghai reprinted in guidebooks. One of those present was certainly well known through his position as Shanghai's municipal medical officer, and had

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<sup>23</sup> Nathaniel J. Ede had acceded to the post of secretary of that body in 1871, and the assets of the society were \$345,000 shortly afterward, in 1874. By 1892 Ede had seen these grown to \$2,000,000, and by 1900—shortly after his 1897 retirement—they reached \$3,000,000. Union Insurance Society of Canton, *A Brief Historical Record of the Union Insurance Society of Canton, Ltd.* (1952); Bangyan Fen and Meijiao Rao, *Enriching Lives: a history of insurance in Hongkong, 1841-2010* (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2011), pp.22-3.

<sup>24</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.69-70.

<sup>25</sup> See Correspondence of David McLean, Transcripts Volume 3, 16 July 1875 - 23 May 1889, MS 380401/02/03, SOAS Library, University of London, p.337.

conducted an inquiry into the state of hospitals in the city.<sup>26</sup> Three were architects or engineers including William Kidner, who had designed buildings for two major Far Eastern banks in Shanghai and J.W. Hart who served as the chief engineer of the Shanghai Waterworks Co., a concern established by a number of British merchants as a commercial enterprise.<sup>27</sup> Solicitors and barristers also made up a third identifiable subgroup amongst these men, potentially having represented either the Eastern or London ends of businesses in legal disputes. All helped to support the larger British business presence in East Asia and as the above examples attest, many had come into contact with the elite expatriate business network in some manner.

#### *Current and former government employees*

Finally, we find nine men who had served, in some way, the British government in East Asia. As noted below the role of president was filled on several occasions by political men who lent their gravitas to the Association, and two of these were among the original membership. The Association's first president, the Rt. Hon. Sir George Bowen had served as recently as 1885 as the Governor of Hongkong.<sup>28</sup> Following him in the role was Sir Thomas Wade. Previously Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary in Peking, he had helped to negotiate both the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858 and the Chefoo Convention in 1876 and was the CA's founding member who had been longest resident in China, spending 39 years in the country.<sup>29</sup> Of particular interest alongside Bowen and Wade are C.M. Ford and N.J. Hannen, who joined the Association whilst in the active employment of HM government. Although doing so

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<sup>26</sup> Mortality in Hongkong, for example, was recorded at 5.35 per cent per year amongst the foreign residents of the colony for the 8 years between 1858 and 1865, excluding the naval and military population, and was considered to be an artificially low percentage as a number of invalids left the colony before death, or in order to recover, see Dennys, *The Treaty Ports of China and Japan*, p.36. Contemporary advice from a surgeon 'long resident in Shanghai' reprinted in the same guidebook attributed the general poor health of the foreign inhabitants in that city to overindulgence in alcohol and rich food alongside the poor quality of produce and water. The advice of the surgeon, alongside other medical men in the city, however, of partaking of 'mutton chop, fresh eggs, curry and bread-and-butter, with coffee and tea, or claret and water' for breakfast, 'rigidly abstaining from all kinds of vegetables and fruit during the summer and autumn months', and 'drinking two glasses of claret' with dinner, or alternatively drinking a total of '3 to 5 or 6 glasses of port or sherry' alongside beer throughout the rest of the day does, perhaps, not stand up to standards of modern healthcare, see pp.395-399.

<sup>27</sup> Hou, *The Evolution of International Business 1800-1945 Volume VIII*, p.89.

<sup>28</sup> R.B. Joyce, 'Bowen, Sir George Ferguson (1821-1899)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 3, Melbourne University press, 1969. Available online at <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bowen-sir-george-ferguson-3032> (last accessed 22 August 2016).

<sup>29</sup> Hans J. van de Ven, 'Wade, Sir Thomas Francis (1818-1895)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, January 2008 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28382>, last accessed 22 August 2016).

may seem to have been something of a conflict of interest it certainly would have offered opportunities for the CA to build strong links with government representatives in China, as envisioned by Alfred Dent. Hannen, it seems, did not retain his membership for any period of time, however he retained substantial links to the CA which form part of an investigation into the methods of gaining political influence the Association sought in chapter three. These men would also provide a valuable knowledge base, bringing a different perspective of the inner workings of government, and with it potentially a better knowledge of how to effectively apply political pressure.

*A case of outsiders? The original membership, women, Eurasians and other nationalities*

It must be noted that, when viewed together, outside of these fairly homogenised categories there stand two men. One, William Endicott, is listed in directories as commander of the receiving ship *Ann Welsh*, located on the Woosung bar at Shanghai. Often a term for a vessel which housed new naval recruits, in China it held a different meaning—a hulk to receive opium shipments. Endicott, an American, fulfilled this role as an opium agent for several firms, although he dealt most prominently with Augustine, Heard & Co., before retiring to London, and is therefore notable as the rules of the CA only allowed for British subjects to become members.<sup>30</sup> His renting of land in Shanghai in 1864 is indicative of at least some wealth and status as a result of this, and fitting into the CA's socioeconomic demographic it is not unreasonable to suppose that, when vetting a little over one hundred members in a short space of time, the problem of his nationality was missed by the CA's secretary.

Indeed, that secretary, R.S. Gundry, was the second of these men He had served as the editor of the *North China Daily News* newspaper for 12 years, and alongside this authored a number of books on China, including *A Retrospect of political & commercial affairs in China & Japan, during the five years 1873 to 1877*.

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<sup>30</sup> His employment has been drawn from China directories and Stephen Chapman Lockwood, *Augustine Heard and Company, 1858-1862: American merchants in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp.28-30. For his retirement and nationality see John Heard, *an account of his life and the history of Augustine Heard and Co*, (1891), p.64 and p.182 (available online at [https://iif.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:43514398\\$1i](https://iif.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:43514398$1i) last accessed 6 November 2018) and the entry for his brother, J.B. Endicott, at *Old Hong Kong*, available online at <https://gwulo.com/node/32346> (last accessed 6 November 2018).



As editor of the *North China Daily News*, he brought the *Supreme Court and Consular Gazette* under the banner of the paper and in doing so increased readership and gained for himself a position of some authority. This background saw him invited by Alfred Dent to become the first honorary secretary of the CA and play a major role in the Association's foundation. Acting in this role and producing the Association's annual reports, while drawing no salary, he quickly became an influential figure. He had a wealth of experience related to voluntary associations, one author describing him as an 'inveterate committee man', serving on 'numerous boards' and he was, reportedly, only a single year from becoming the Grand Master of the China based Masonic lodge of the British Empire upon his return to Britain.<sup>31</sup> This background, unique amongst the Association, saw him undertake a great deal of work and for the Association's formative years he was arguably its most important member. Indeed, such was his importance that when he threatened retirement if the CA refused to publish material of a confidential nature Sir Thomas Sutherland was dispatched to speak to Gundry, and the current CA chairman wrote to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to see if such publication might be allowed.<sup>32</sup> He held considerable influence, and although not deeply investigated in this thesis he was viewed as a particularly vocal member of the Association, willing to be more publically critical of the British government than many other early influential members.<sup>33</sup> Following his retirement as secretary he returned to serve as president.<sup>34</sup>

While this offers a brief overview of the individuals in the CA, it is worthwhile to mention some groups which are absent, if perhaps expectedly so. None were women, although honorary membership was, in theory, open to 'any individual' who had 'distinguished themselves in connection with China' in the eyes of the Association.<sup>35</sup> However, women were scarce on the China Coast, with male to female

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<sup>31</sup> Additional information on Gundry has been drawn from French, *Through the Looking Glass*, pp.56-7.

<sup>32</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 24 July 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London. ; Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 2 August 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2; Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 August 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>33</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, pp.292-4.

<sup>34</sup> Gundry held this role from 1905-1908, see Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London and Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>35</sup> The China Association (established 1889) Objects, rules and regulations Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

population ratios 6:1 in Shanghai in 1870, although this had reduced to 1.7:1 for Shanghai by 1895, and a similar 1.77:1 for Hongkong in 1901.<sup>36</sup> They were even less likely to be prominent in the commercial realm from which the CA drew its membership, with only four women holding senior enough positions to sign correspondence for companies in Shanghai as late as 1928.<sup>37</sup> Wider trends saw women typically excluded from voluntary associations, too, to the extent that for some the exclusion of women was such a solidified practice that it went ‘without explicit written declaration’ in the groups objects and literature.<sup>38</sup>

This seems to have been the case for the CA, who were taken by some surprise when in 1900 Far Eastern travel writer and trailblazing female member of the Royal Geographical Society Isabella Bird Bishop wrote to enquire ‘whether women were admitted as members of the association.’<sup>39</sup> Bishop was certainly well qualified for honorary membership, having authored a number of works on China, Japan, and Korea, amongst others.<sup>40</sup> Faced with a request from such a prominent individual the General Committee, somewhat reluctantly, ‘decided that, although Mrs Bishop’s personal membership would be welcome, it would not be judicious to admit the principle [of admitting female members]’.<sup>41</sup>

The matter would resurface sporadically throughout the CA’s life, and due to the inherent turnover of members and committees received different responses. In 1913 the committee decided not to admit female members of the British Association

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<sup>36</sup> For the Shanghai ratios see Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, p.311. The Hongkong ratios are calculated from the *Census of the British Empire, 1901*, p.134.

<sup>37</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.88-89.

<sup>38</sup> See Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, p.202 for this in general. For their specific exclusion without declaration see Aaron Sullivan ‘That Charity which begins at Home’: Ethnic Societies and Benevolence in Eighteenth Century Philadelphia’ *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 134, 4, (2010), p.322; or R.J. Morris ‘Introduction: Civil Society, Associations and Urban Places: Class, Nation and Culture in Nineteenth-century Europe’ in Graeme Morton, Boudien de Vries and R.J. Morris (eds.), *Civil Society, Associations and Urban Places: Class, Nation and Culture in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p.13 which notes that even in ‘rich associational cultures’ such as France and Britain ‘Women were excluded by rule or social practice.’

<sup>39</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 January 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2; Morag Bell and Cheryl McEwan ‘The Admission of Women Fellows to the Royal Geographical Society, 1892-1914; the controversy and the outcome’ *The Geographical Journal*, 162, 3 (1996), pp. 295-312.

<sup>40</sup> Isabella Bird Bishop authored works included *A Lady’s Life in the Rocky Mountains* (G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1886), *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1881), *Korea and her Neighbours* (Fleming H. Revell, 1898) and *The Yangtze Valley and Beyond: An account of journeys in China, chiefly in the province of Sze Chuan and among the Man-tze of the Somo territory* (John Murray, London, 1899). For a general biography see James Huntley Grayson ‘Travelling for Her Health: The Extraordinary Life of Isabella Bird Bishop’ *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch*, 58 (1983), pp.35-52.

<sup>41</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 January 1900.

of Japan—an affiliated body—to CA membership as the ‘rules do not provide for such a contingency; and that without the express wish of a great majority of members women will therefore not be permitted to join.’<sup>42</sup> When reconsidered in 1947, as a proposed means for increasing the size and influence of the Association, the committee decided that the rules—in contrast to the interpretation given in 1913—already allowed membership to be extended to women, as ‘British subjects... connected with China, Hongkong or Japan.’<sup>43</sup> Despite this, no evidence suggests that any women became members during the period under consideration in this thesis—there is even no record of Isabella Bird Bishop following up her enquiry. None, certainly, ever served on committees, nor were Women permitted to attend dinners although they were allowed to attend the Association’s later receptions and soirees as guests.

With branches—discussed in greater detail below—located throughout East Asia, in international settlements and treaty ports, the question of admission of Eurasian members was also one of some importance to committees. Although the Eurasian population and community could often be viewed by contemporaries with suspicion and many of its members regarded as lower class and a threat to the maintenance of racial boundaries and separation, there were notable exceptions to this view.<sup>44</sup> Some were prominent businessmen with strong ties to expatriate interests, most notably Robert Hotung who was a director of ‘eighteen leading companies on the China Coast’, several of which he was chairman and leading shareholder.<sup>45</sup> It was their service in the First World War, however, that saw the Shanghai branch enquire of London whether Eurasians might be permitted to join the CA.<sup>46</sup> As the rules of the CA made no specific provision regarding Eurasian members the London committee chose to leave the decision ‘to the discretion of Branch committees’ although they insisted that each case was to be ‘judged strictly on its merits’ to ensure that applicants were of sound quality, and that all applicants ‘must be recognised by the competent

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<sup>42</sup> H.C. Wilcox, Secretary to British Association of Japan, 16 December, 1913, Circulars Vol. X, 148-163, May 1913 - January 1914, CHAS/MCP/18 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>43</sup> Bulletin to All Members, 20 May 1947, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1947, CHAS/MCP/47, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London; Bulletin to All Members, 21 May 1947, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1947, CHAS/MCP/47.

<sup>44</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.71.

<sup>45</sup> For Robert Ho-Tung see Yen-p’ing Hao, ‘The Compradors’, pp.89-95.

<sup>46</sup> Circular to the General Committee, no. 209, 22 November 1915, Circulars Vol. XIII, 201-215, January 1915 – March 1916, CHAS/MCP/21 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

British authorities as British subjects' (underlining in original text).<sup>47</sup> The final decision made in Shanghai in 1917, with the committee agreeing that 'if he is otherwise well recommended' a Eurasian applicant would not be rejected upon racial grounds.<sup>48</sup> In this decision, the CA chose a position cognate with the stance of British authorities in China which did not discriminate, officially, on race provided the subject held British nationality.<sup>49</sup>

In appraisal, however, it is important to stress that these examples serve as little more than footnotes to the history of the membership of the CA. More than anything, they highlight that during the period under consideration, the CA conformed to the standards of membership that would be expected. Predominantly, the Association consisted of white male members, drawn from a well-off socio-economic background. Although Eurasian members were admitted to branches at the periphery it must also be remembered that membership of a branch did not necessarily guarantee membership of the London head association or committee should a member return to Britain. There is no record surviving that suggests Eurasians were granted membership of the London branch before 1955—although there is similarly no record surviving of an application, and consequently none of a rejection, from a Eurasian within the archives, suggesting that a simple lack of Eurasians within Britain who fitted the socioeconomic background of the CA may have been a factor in this matter.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 December 1915, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>48</sup> Circular to the General Committee, no. 243, 4 August 1917, Circulars Vol. XV, 231-244, November 1916 – September 1917, CHAS/MCP/23 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>49</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.72.

<sup>50</sup> Work has begun to be undertaken into Eurasian populations in America and Asia, see for example Emma Teng, *Eurasian: Mixed Identities in the United States, China, and Hong Kong, 1842–1943* (Oakland, University of California Press, 2013). Eurasians who 'returned' to Britain, or who were born in Britain are hard to trace, and a difficult group to quantify numerically. They were, however, largely of a much lower socioeconomic standing than the average CA member, holding roles as junior clerks, or in the police or prisons department, although many still retained a desire to return home, See Stephen Frederick Fisher, *Eurasians in Hong Kong: a sociological study of a marginal group* (unpublished MPhil Thesis, Hongkong University, 1975), pp.102-105. A significant community also developed in Liverpool, often children of Chinese seamen linked to the Alfred Holt line. Many of these men gave their lives working dangerous shipping routes in the Second World War, and many who survived were forcibly deported afterwards. For some insight, see a project headed by Yvonne Foley, the child of one such seaman, available online at <http://www.halfandhalf.org.uk/index.htm> (last accessed 8 May 2018).

### *Conclusion*

This analysis of the CA's membership reinforces the view that this was an elite Association. Ultimately, we cannot be sure how many of these men were true expatriates in the sense of our earlier definition; that is, sojourners employed and dispatched by multinational firms. What we can say, however, is that the vast majority had experienced considerable economic success, even if, for some, this was as part of a China based or purely China-British trading firm. In this way, they entered into expatriate circles, and became, in many ways, indistinguishable from these true expatriates anyway.

Their joining together may well have been stimulated by the fact that the social circles in which these men operated were, in essence, the same in East Asia, with these men socialising as part of the 'expatriate' group in China who consciously developed their own distinct social sphere—and a highly successful settler could pass into this group. Government officials were also, although to a lesser extent, drawn into this social sphere. As early as 1842 the new superintendent of trade, and later Governor of Hongkong, Henry Pottinger had been dined by the China Coast 'Commercial Community', with the evening organised by James Matheson of Jardine Matheson.<sup>51</sup> Many British civil servants, too, were drawn from a relatively high social strata and this would perhaps account for their inclusion in the CA's social sphere.<sup>52</sup> On a wider level many British government officials—at least those stationed in treaty ports, as opposed to the Peking legation—would have been a key focal point of the British community as its representative in any disputes that arose with the Chinese authorities.

These groups were also to some extent dependent on one another for their very existence. Without financial services, merchants could not function as effectively, and without merchants there would have been less—or perhaps no—need for these financial services. Shipping provided for the necessary transit of goods to make the entire enterprise profitable, and this would even develop into formal connections and

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<sup>51</sup> Ward Fay, 'The Opening of China', p.74.

<sup>52</sup> T.G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.7-17 outlines the forms this took for the Foreign Office.

conferences.<sup>53</sup> Many were also potentially connected, as has been discussed, through their business interests and wider business networks and may have developed relationships through these of a business or personal nature. To choose one striking example, four of the five members of the HSBC London Committee in 1890—Albert Deacon, E.F. Duncanson, David McLean and William Keswick—were founding members of the CA.<sup>54</sup> By joining together under the combined banner of the CA they gained the opportunity to work together and present a single combined voice to speak for the trade as a whole.

When considered as a combined entity, it is clear that the CA's membership granted it the potential to become an influential political and commercial body. In its efforts to represent the East Asian trade, its individual membership encapsulated such key firms as the HSBC, Chartered Bank, Jardine Matheson, the Swire Group, and the P&O Steam Navigation Co., alongside many smaller, though still sizeable interests. By uniting top managers from these competitors under a single banner—alongside the elite of settler interests who had become returnees—the CA could lay some claim to provide a coherent, voice for the British mercantile community in China, as well as an exceptional knowledge of Chinese politics through past and present members of HM government in China. It was upon this basis that the Association undertook its political manoeuvres and lobbying that are discussed later in this thesis.

### **Officers and committees**

Whilst knowledge of the membership of the CA offers us insights into its makeup, it is equally important that the structure of the Association is investigated so we can understand how the Association operated. It is a feature of voluntary associations that power can become concentrated in the hands of a few individuals or representatives of narrow interests—this, rather than simply weight of numbers, will determine where true influence within the CA rested. To understand this fully, an examination must be made of how the CA operated in practice. In many ways the CA was fairly typical of

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<sup>53</sup> J.H. Scott, Son of the Chair of Scott's shipbuilders became a partner of Swires in the 1870s. See Elizabeth A Hook, *A Guide to the Papers of John Swire and Sons Limited* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1977), introduction. The connection, however, was deeper than this. Scotts had originally built ships for Holts, who operated the Ocean Steamship Co. Both Swires and Scotts would take shares in the Ocean Steamship Co., and Swires acted as their Far Eastern agents. They would later, too, invest in Swires China Navigation Company, the relationship lasting until 1970s. See Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, p.242; Geoffrey Jones, *Multinationals and Global Capitalism: From the Nineteenth to the Twenty First Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.156.

<sup>54</sup> "Charities &c." *Times* (London, England), 26 July. 1890, p.3.

the structure of other, similar voluntary associations. A group of four (later five) officers presided over an executive and general committee, and below these came the larger body of membership, often largely uninvolved with the political side of the group.<sup>55</sup> However, as with any group this structure was nuanced and unique in specific ways.

### *The officers*

Originally, the officers of the CA consisted of a chairman, vice-chairman, hon. secretary and hon. treasurer, with the role of president added three years later.<sup>56</sup> Elections for the roles were held at the AGM of the Association, though were rarely contested with nominees seemingly settled upon well in advance.<sup>57</sup> Of the officers of the Association, the most prestigious role, if not the most powerful, was that of president.<sup>58</sup> Those presidents who remained involved in the China trade, or who had an exceptional knowledge of China, were often active on committees, for example ex-diplomat Sir John Jordan.<sup>59</sup> Others were less active, but the role always served to give the CA a well-known and prestigious leader. Such holders of the role included the Rt. Hon. Sir George Bowen, ex-Governor of Hongkong, Horace James Seymour, ex-British ambassador to China, Captain Lord Ailwyn of the Royal Navy and Lieutenant

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<sup>55</sup> Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, pp.253-257.

<sup>56</sup> For purposes of analysis of these roles, for the first three years of the CA the vice-chairman will be considered the chairman—when the roles were re-organised original vice-chairman William Keswick became chairman, and held the role until 1905. Before this reorganisation the role of chairman was rotated; it was, in essence, therefore actually the later role of president. The role of vice-chairman did not exist until this reorganisation.

<sup>57</sup> Indeed, nominees by 1947-8 were chosen by a small circle of members, with the job of proposing officers then delegated to a member who would make the proposal according to a 'programme' prepared in advance, having been 'cast for the part.' See G.E. Mitchell to John. R. Masson, 3 June 1948, *China Association Bulletins and Circulars*, JSS/11/5/2/1/, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>58</sup> The names of men who filled these roles are drawn from the Annual Reports of the China Association, 1889-1962, available as Annual Reports, CHAS/A/01 - 12, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>59</sup> John Jordan contributed regularly until his untimely death at a committee meeting of the CA. See E. W. E. W. Edwards, 'Jordan, Sir John Newell (1852-1925)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34242>, last accessed 22 August 2016).

General Sir George Macdonogh, head of the Federation of British industries [FBI].<sup>60</sup> Ailwyn and Macdonogh also potentially represented the strong link felt by those who had served in China to the British military. The role saw consistent turnover, with many serving only a single term of office. Although investigation is beyond the scope of this thesis, these short tenures were potentially due to other commitments these prominent men would have had, or simply a lack of interest.

Below the rank of President came the chairman and vice chairman. As the heads of the Association's committees, these roles were almost always filled by partners, directors, or prominent members of firms still actively involved in the China trade. These chairs directed the Association, leading discussion at committee meetings and calling upon contacts at the Foreign Office when required. The holders of the roles offer a great deal of insight into the firms who led the CA. As figures 2.1 and 2.2 demonstrate, the roles saw no turnover and were held by Jardine Matheson and Dent Bros. representatives until 1905, when changes were spurred by complaints from the Shanghai branch of the Association.<sup>61</sup> Representatives of Ilbert and Co., were given the chairmanship after this date, to better represent Shanghai interests—although as we shall see, they felt their power was limited by the oligarchic control exercised over the rest of the committee by Jardine Matheson and the HSBC. As Figure 2.3 shows Jardine Matheson oligarchy was certainly extant. They held almost continuous influence over at least one of the chairs through representatives of Jardine Matheson, Matheson and Co. or the British and Chinese Corporation [BCC] (a joint Jardine Matheson and HSBC interest). It could further be argued that the Peking syndicate's three years holding the chairmanship might fall under the Jardine Matheson sphere of influence, the Peking syndicate and the BCC holding a joint interest in the Chinese

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<sup>60</sup> For further detail on George Bowen, see R.B. Joyce, 'Bowen, Sir George Ferguson (1821-1899)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. For Horace James Seymour see 'Seymour, Sir Horace James', *Who Was Who*, A & C Black, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing plc, 1920–2016; online edn, Oxford University Press, 2014 ; online edn, April 2014 (<http://www.ukwhoswho.com/view/article/oupww/whowaswho/U159469>, last accessed 22 August 2016). Little information is available for Lord Ailwyn. However, a certain link for China can be drawn from his participation in a parliamentary mission to China in 1942, mentioned in Hansard, available online at <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1942/sep/10/parliamentary-mission-to-china> (last accessed 22 August 2016). For sir George Macdonogh see Ian F. W. Beckett, 'Macdonogh, Sir George Mark Watson (1865–1942)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38446>, last accessed 22 August 2016).

<sup>61</sup> Dent Bros. holding of this chair was due to CA founder Alfred Dents position in the company. It was probably due to his role as founder that he held the chair, rather than any great level of influence of the company within the CA.



Central Railways.<sup>62</sup> The level of influence Jardine Matheson held within the CA is clear, and becomes evident throughout this thesis, although they were by no means the sole leaders of direction within the Association.

Indeed, rotation of roles did exist to some extent. Nine separate firms held the Vice-Chairmanship as well as serving and former MP's and the CA's own secretary. That these MPs only held the role for four years highlights the CA's preference for co-operation with British government departments, rather than applying political pressure through parliament. The CA's secretary fulfilling this role from 1946 to 1952 is symptomatic of decreased interest in the CA, and the struggles of the China trade more generally. Rotation may also have served to represent various interests more fairly—or at least give the appearance of doing so.

The selection of chairmen was certainly a considered manoeuvre, and as well as representing firms fairly was also linked to the overall aims of the CA. When the CA attempted to align with British government policy after 1925, and encourage co-operation with Chinese interests to attempt to defuse the threat of Chinese nationalism, noted proponents of this were chosen to serve in the role. S.F. Mayers had sought Japanese involvement with a BCC scheme as early as 1912/13, showing, if not co-operation with Chinese interests, at least a willingness to co-opt Asian partners into British led schemes. Brigadier Woodroffe of the Pekin Syndicate was noted as the 'most flamboyant advocate' of the policy of 'accommodation and co-operation' with China during his time working for the company.<sup>63</sup> With G.W. Swire, another proponent of co-operation with Chinese interests, these men held the chairmanship for the majority of the 1931-42 period, and espoused the benefits of co-operation when required.<sup>64</sup> In 1946 it was agreed to grant the chairman remuneration of £800 per annum, alongside a £200 per annum entertaining bonus, although this seems to have altered the patterns of firms holding the roles little, if at all.<sup>65</sup>

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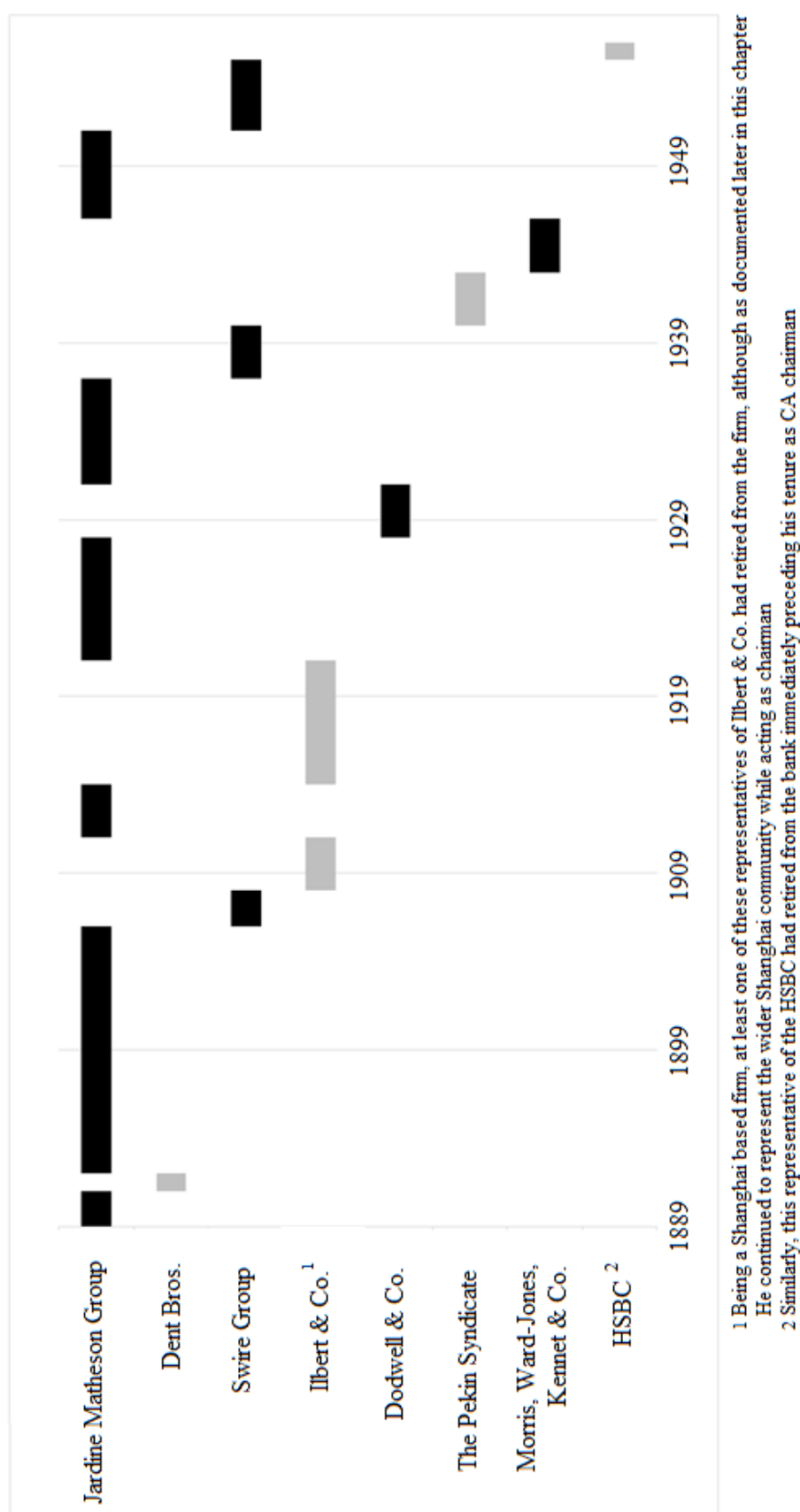
<sup>62</sup> Frank H.H. King 'Extra-Regional Banks and Investments in China' in Rondo Cameron and V.I. Bovykin (eds.), *International Banking 1870-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p.393.

<sup>63</sup> Osterhammel, 'Imperialism in Transition', pp.283-4.

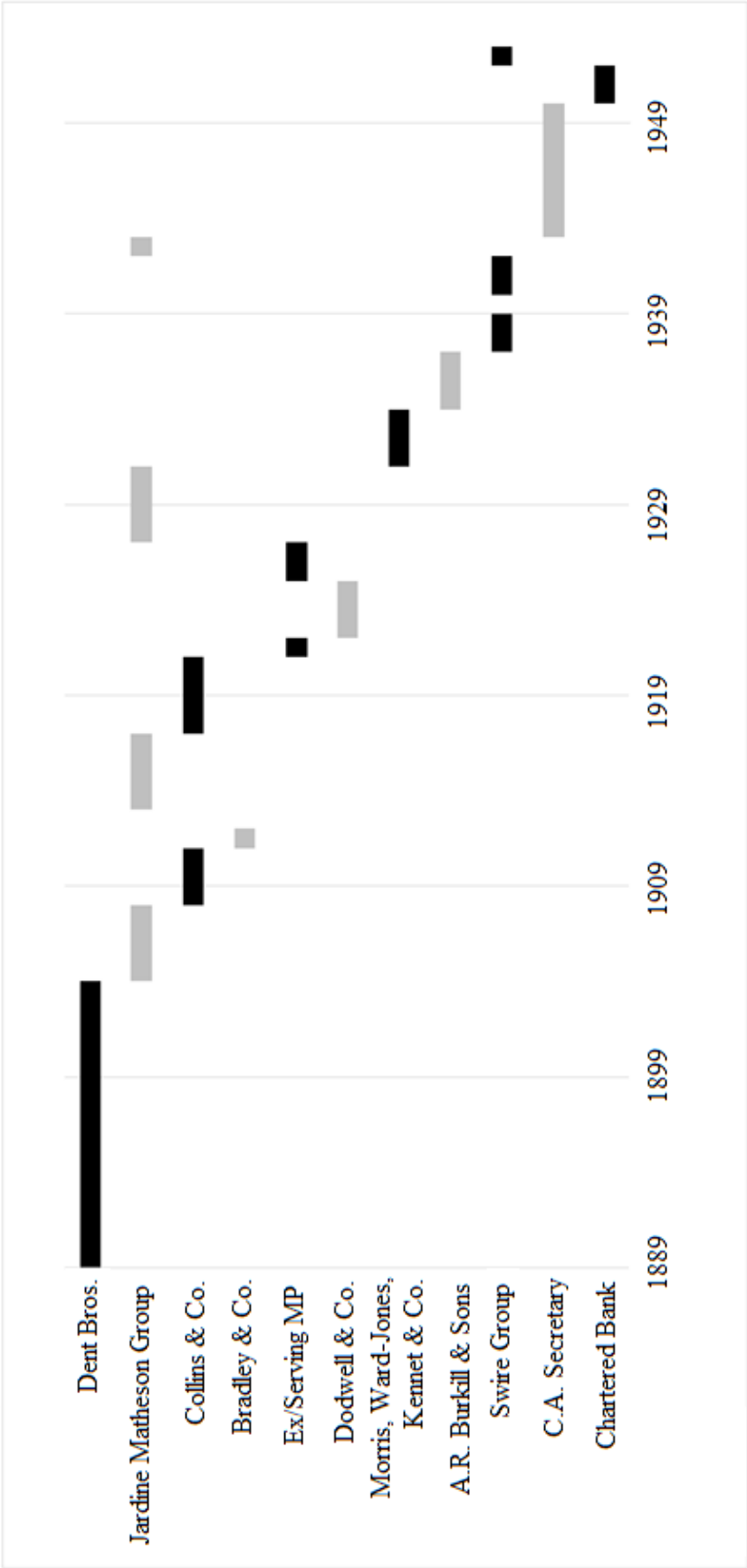
<sup>64</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.178-84.

<sup>65</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 June 1946, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1946, CHAS/MCP/46.

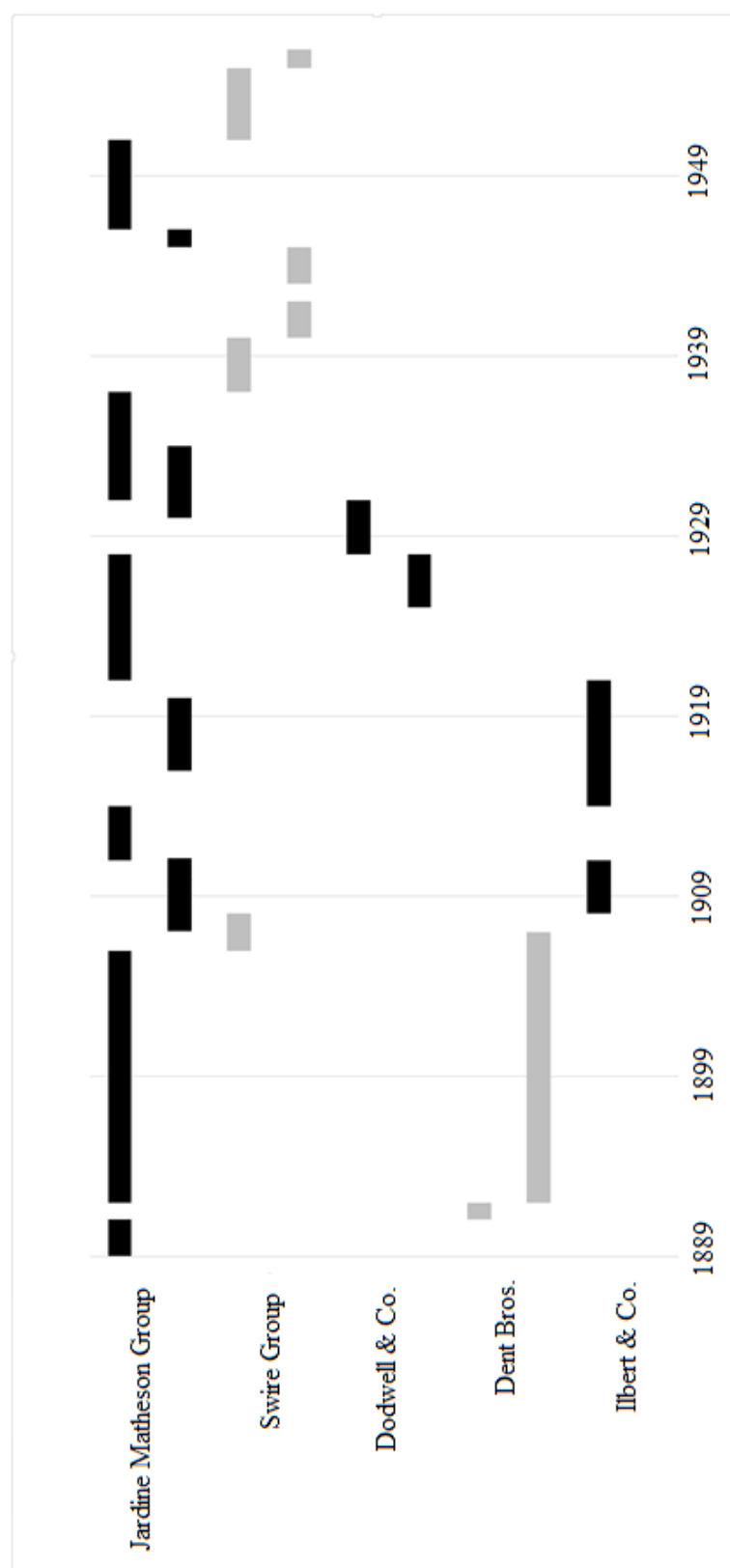
**Figure 2.1:** Firms holding the China Association chairmanship



**Figure 2.2:** Background of the China Association vice-chairmanship



**Figure 2.3:** Dates holding chairmanship and vice-chairmanship, select firms<sup>66</sup>



<sup>66</sup> For each firm the top row represents the chairmanship, while the vice-chairmanship is the lower.

Figure 2.3 also demonstrates that the Swire group's control of these chairs was concentrated towards the end of the period under consideration. This aligns with the Swire group becoming the CA's largest funder in this period, and is symptomatic of increased Swire involvement and control within the CA, although they remained a much smaller firm than Jardine Matheson overall, suggesting it was due to this funding—or perhaps due to G.W. Swires' views matching those of the British government closely in this period—that accounted for this.<sup>67</sup> Although few representatives of banking interests are recorded, it is important to note here that many of the men who served as chairman and vice chairman did have links to these institutions. William Keswick, David Landale, and Stanley Dodwell all served as directors or committee members of the HSBC.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Alfred Dent had served as a director for the Chartered Bank.<sup>69</sup> Such Cross-directorships were common in East Asia during this period, and providing a formal structure through which these firms could co-operate under a combined name was a potential benefit of the CA.<sup>70</sup>

Besides these roles, the CA had two further officers. Of these, the role of Hon. Treasurer was largely restricted to ensuring finances of the Association were not overstretched. More specialised jobs such as auditing of the Association's finances were handled by an external professional, or a qualified member of the CA.<sup>71</sup> Investment of surplus funds was undertaken by the General Committee as a whole, and the finances of the group were held by their official bankers, the HSBC. On rare occasions, the treasurer was required to press firms for funds to support the Association.<sup>72</sup>

The role of Hon. Secretary offered its holder more scope for shaping the CA's activities and focus, and was a potentially powerful one to hold in the Association as

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<sup>67</sup> Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, p.119.

<sup>68</sup> For Keswick see "Charities & C." *Times* (London, England), 26 July. 1890, p.3. For Landale and Dodwell see "The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation." *Times* (London, England) 28 October 1913, p.15.

<sup>69</sup> Philip K. Law, 'Dent family (*per. c.* 1820–1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/53862>, last accessed 13 October 2017).

<sup>70</sup> Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, specifically chapter six.

<sup>71</sup> In 1896, for example, the accounts of the Association were audited by executive committee member E. Iveson. See the Associations annual report for 1896-7, p.xiv, available at Annual Reports, 1889 - 98, CHAS/A/01, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>72</sup> This occurred, for example, in 1899. Potentially, this was undertaken by the treasurer as at the time the role was filled by founder Alfred Dent, a man well known to other heads of firms involved in the East Asian trade. See Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 23 February 1898, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

we have noted with R.S. Gundry, who was a loud voice within the Association, and later became its president. Typically, however, the Secretary was responsible for overseeing the day to day business of the CA, running the office, responding to correspondence and preparing the annual reports. Later duties of Secretary E.M. Gull included an Association-funded trip to China to report upon the state of the trade.<sup>73</sup> The role was originally unpaid, however later secretaries received payment and, as discussed later, a pension scheme.<sup>74</sup>

#### *The general, executive and sub-committees*

Below these officers came the men who held seats on the Executive and General Committees of the Association. Of these two committees, the executive was smaller, and was intended to meet more often, and at shorter notice, should this be required. Most decisions were, however, taken at the wider meetings of the general committee. Indeed, the rules and regulations of the Association granted the general committee wide reaching powers. They were to approve the applications of new members, fill mid-term vacancies on the body at their own discretion, and elect the executive committee from their own ranks. They were to schedule the AGM of the Association, and also were able to create bye-laws for the Association, however changes to the rules and regulations required a Special General Meeting to be called. The General Committee were further to control the direction and scope of the Association's charitable efforts. Finally they were to organise any dinners or other social functions as they desired and invite to these official guests, who attended free of charge, to ensure these occasions served a political as well as social function.<sup>75</sup> Alongside the officers, these men held the greatest scope to direct the CA's aims and objectives.

As such it is important to assess the makeup of these committees, and to do so we may turn again to the background of the members who formed the first iteration of

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<sup>73</sup> Minutes of meetings of the General Committee, 12 and 26 June 1934, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>74</sup> Only original secretary R.S. Gundry performed this role for free. His replacement received an 'honorarium and salary'—for the post remained that of honorary secretary—of £438.1s.8d. See the annual report for 1902-3, p.ix, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>75</sup> All of this information is drawn from The China Association (established 1889) Objects, rules and regulations, Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

the bodies.<sup>76</sup> The positions these men held are noted in Table 2.1 with short biographies again available in Appendix A.

These men marked the elite of the returned expatriates from China. They had served their companies, or the British government, at the highest levels. And many of those with business interests still retained these, operating as heads of mercantile, shipping, and banking firms despite their return to Britain. It was this background of influence and technical expertise—and the firms they represented—that would help shape the political ambitions and methods, as well as the relationship of the CA with the British government. As with the overall membership and officers, certain interests were predominant, and these match the earlier noted patterns. Only three firms had more than a single representative on the general committee; two each for the HSBC, the P&O, and Jardine Matheson. What might be termed settler interests are almost entirely unrepresented, beyond Thomas Hanbury's considerable land ownership, and a small number of firms of a lesser size.

It is perhaps notable—though it can only remain speculation—that it was in 1890 that Jardine Matheson and the HSBC agreed informally to co-operate over the provision of two major loans in China, in order that they would not impede one another's business. Their strong involvement in the early CA may even have been linked to this co-operation, or an attempt to further strengthen their links.<sup>77</sup>

When the executive committee is investigated similar patterns emerge. Of the nine committee men, five were partners in mercantile firms, one was the chief manager of the HSBC, one the managing director of the P&O. The final two members were an ex-Governor of Hongkong and the CA secretary. The most influential of these firms within the CA were, undoubtedly, those Cain and Hopkins have identified as 'Gentlemanly Capitalists' hoping to direct British China policy from the metropole.<sup>78</sup> Over time this committee makeup changed as new business opportunities came to the fore in China and East Asia and others faded. Swire Group representatives served on committees from 1892, and Dodwells representatives from 1899. Later rule changes,

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<sup>76</sup> The makeup of the committee itself was drawn from the 1899 annual report, p.1, available at Annual Reports, 1889 - 98, CHAS/A/01, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>77</sup> Edward Lefevour, 'Challenge and Response' in Maggie Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books ltd., 1982), pp.190-1.

<sup>78</sup> Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*.

**Table 2.1:** The 1889 general Committee of the China Association

Source: Annual Report of the China Association, 1889

General Committee Member	Current Relationship to China	Further Information
Grant, C.L.	active commercial link	Adamson, Bell & Co.
Gwyther, J.H.		Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China
Ezekiel, S.		David Sassoon & Co. (signatory)
Dent, Alfred		Dent Bros.
Deacon, A.		E&A Deacon
Pugh, W.		Evans, Pugh & Co.
Kilby, E.F.		Flint Kilby & Co.
Duncanson, E.F.		Gibb, Livingstone & Co.
Holliday, J.		Holliday, Wise & Co.
Jackson, T.		HSBC
McLean, D.		HSBC
Iveson, E.		Iveson & Co.
Whittall, J.		J. Whittall and Co.
Jardine, Sir Robert		Jardine Matheson
Keswick, Wm.		Jardine Matheson
Maitland, J.A.		Maitland & Co.
Barnes, F.D.		P&O Line
Sutherland, T.		P&O Line
Strachan, W.M.		Strachan & Co.
Hanbury, T.		Land investment <sup>79</sup>
Coxon, A.	inactive commercial link	-
Lucas, C.		-
Myburgh, P.A. (QC)		-
Bowen, Sir George	ex-government employee	former Governor of Hongkong
Hornby, Edmund		former Chief Justice, British Supreme Court of China and Japan
Wade, Sir Thos.		former British Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary
Gundry, R.S.	other	China Association Secretary

<sup>79</sup> Hanbury continued to hold substantial land investments. In 1890, this ran to some 1,462 properties in Shanghai, administered by his chosen agents, Iveson & Co. For further detail see Alasdair Moore, *La Mortola: in the footsteps of Thomas Hanbury* (London: Cadogan Guides, 2004), specifically chapter nine.



discussed below, saw seats delegated to specific companies including BAT, ICI and Asiatic Petroleum amongst others. These were by this period not only the CA's largest funders, but also those most closely aligned with its political direction. The retirement of G.W. Swire in 1947, to choose one example, saw Swire himself write to the CA suggesting Sir John Masson as his replacement and John Swire and Sons write officially to nominate Masson for election at the next AGM.<sup>80</sup>

Alongside these two main committees, the Association also delegated specific tasks to numerous sub-committees. Unfortunately, as these acted with a degree of independence from the central committees records have not been retained. Some details can be gleaned when they returned to report findings to the General committee or are mentioned briefly by name. Typically, they sought to assess how specific sectors of the East Asian trade might be improved, such as reversing declining sales of China tea, dealing with difficulties arising over trade marks, or focusing upon the Japanese portion of the East Asian trade.<sup>81</sup> There is no record of the CA ever concerning itself with the import of the eponymous China pottery, although the name of the Association seems to have confused, or at least been humorous to some, such as the person who wrote to *Funny Folks, A Weekly Budget of Funny Pictures, Funny Notes, Funny Jokes and Funny Stories* under the pseudonym 'A. Potter' to inform the readership that 'No, the China Association isn't a Blue-China one' in 1893.<sup>82</sup>

### **Return or retirement? Continuing mercantile links of China Association members**

In closing this discussion of the CA's membership and committees, it is apposite to make one further investigation, notably, into the continued mercantile activity of members. As we have noted, there were many possible mechanisms which related to business activity that could underpin an individual's return. Some returned to take roles in the London end of true multinationals. Others, to take roles in 'sister' firms providing a London base for Eastern trading firms. Some may have held more passive

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<sup>80</sup> G.E. Mitchell to Members of the General Committee, 9 May 1947, China Association Bulletins and Circulars, JSS/11/5/2/1/, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive.

<sup>81</sup> For the China Tea Subcommittee see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 20 January 1892, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1. For the Trade Marks subcommittee see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 16 May 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>82</sup> "Correspondence." *Funny Folks, A Weekly Budget of Funny Pictures, Funny Notes, Funny Jokes and Funny Stories* (London, England), 4 March. 1893.

commercial interests, for example land in Shanghai, or investments on the Shanghai stock exchange. Finally, a complete severance from East Asia was possible, with capital removed from businesses and repatriated to Britain, and no continuing links held to East Asia. If they continued to hold active links to the trade, and specific firms, we can more safely say these men represented these interests, and that these interests were at play in the CA. First, we may turn to the original membership. From this analysis we must discount a number of men who remained in China at the time of the Association's inception, as they would have been unable to directly attempt to influence the London Committee. For a further six men, the records are inconclusive as for their continued activity in commerce, and these too are excluded. This leaves a total of 92 men. Of these, 38 held active positions with China-linked companies, while the remaining 54 did not—a ratio of 1:1.42.<sup>83</sup> For the original general committee, as outlined in Table 2.1 this ratio was reversed, with active commercial men outnumbering inactive by 2.86:1. These active men predominantly, therefore, held positions of power within the CA and their employment history shows they represented some of the largest firms in the China trade.

Critically, this manifested itself as a wider body of membership little interested in the political side of the Association, with only those actively involved in China linked companies regularly contributing to the Associations daily work and direction. This became a common theme, with secretaries complaining about compendious annual reports going largely unread, or skimmed at best, and low turnouts for AGM's (and as we shall see below, Special General Meetings) compared to annual dinners—even when the two followed one another on the same date.<sup>84</sup> Suffice it to say at this point—a full appraisal is made in chapter 3—that many seem to have joined purely for the social functions the CA offered, relishing the chance to renew social ties and

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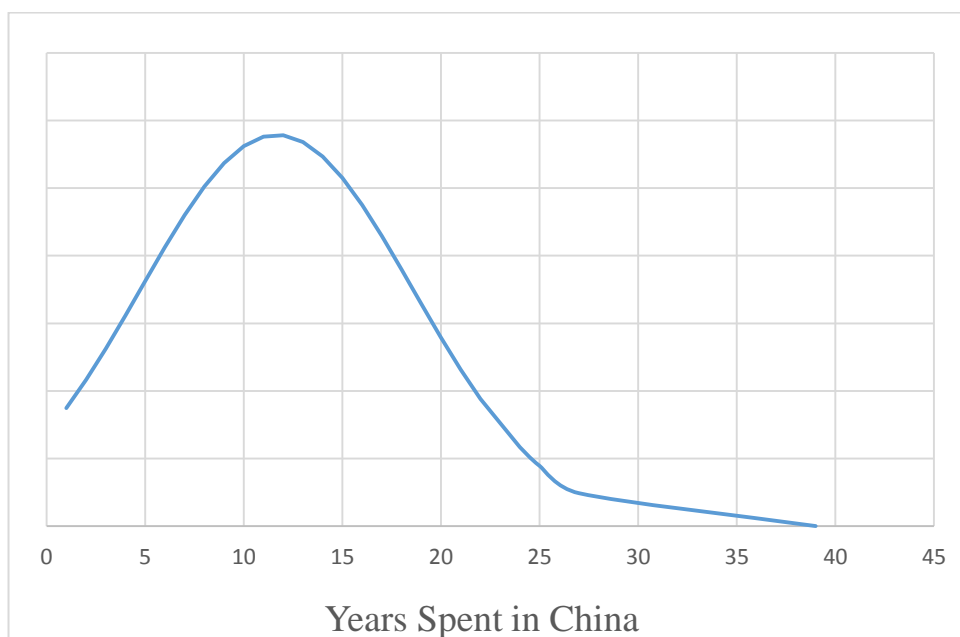
<sup>83</sup> This analysis includes ex-government employees. Although they would not have had commercial links while stationed in China, others did gain them (as directorships of firms) upon their retirement.

<sup>84</sup> Secretary R.S. Gundry noted that it was a 'much smaller number that, he was sorry to say, usually put in an appearance at annual meetings' than the annual dinner. He also believed that he was producing reports that 'not one member of the Association in ten would take the trouble to read.' See The China Association Annual General Meeting, 23 March 1898, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2; and The China Association Annual General Meeting, 17 April 1901, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2. It seems, in some cases, it was the size of the annual reports that led to few members reading them. A letter to the *North China Herald* from G. James Morrison complained that 'local reports, etc., become very interesting if bound up year by year, but some such as those of the China Association are of quite an impossible size, resulting, I have no doubt, in large numbers of the reports going into the waste-paper basket.' See 'The Size of Pamphlets' *The North China Herald*.

appreciative of a space in which they could reminisce about China with like-minded individuals. This, too, ensured that large firms could retain oligarchic control of what was, in theory at least, a subscriber democracy.

Briefly, it is therefore instructive here to use the data we have on these founding members to assess their time in China more generally. And although issues surrounding the transience of these men—not all were in the same location, nor were they in China at the same time—complicate the story, it is clear that the careers of these men in China were enough to form the basis for their interest in the CA's social functions. As Figure 2.4 shows, the average identifiable length of the sojourn members had taken in East Asia was around 12 years.<sup>85</sup> Turning to location, we find the chance for the creation of links to also have existed, with 51 of 92 members for whom this is possible to ascertain resident predominantly in Shanghai, and a further 24 in Hongkong, although due to their transitory lifestyle, they were not completely stationary.<sup>86</sup>

**Figure 2.4:** Average length of time spent in China (original membership)



<sup>85</sup> Due to limitations of the directories investigated, this is likely a considerable underestimate.

<sup>86</sup> Due to incomplete records data relating to both the time of sojourn in East Asia is calculated using fewer members than are in the overall study of original membership. Similarly, as some members resided for equal periods in two locations, they are discounted from any calculations regarding the geographical basis of the membership.

### **Corporate members**

Control and influence within the CA, however, were not purely restricted to individuals, in the same way that membership of the CA was not restricted only to the individual members investigated above. Soon after its foundation it was decided firms with an interest in the East Asian trade could also apply to join. Much as with individual members, these firms were to be proposed and seconded by extant members, and having joined would contribute a sum to the Association's office expenses. This gave the firm the benefit of CA representation and access to information returned by other members from East Asia, as well as the library located in the CA offices comprising of periodicals and other works upon East Asia.

Quickly, these firms became the major source of funding for the Association. Although a complete record is unnecessary as many firms gave small, occasional donations, a selection of firms who gave funds consistently, and on a larger scale, are shown in Table 2.2. This confirms, as suggested by the analysis of the backgrounds of the Association membership, that the body was predominantly backed by those involved in mercantile activities and financial services in East Asia. Indeed, names including the HSBC, Chartered Bank, P&O, Jardine Matheson and the Union Insurance Society of Canton are once again prominent, and their contributions continued throughout the period under study. Other firms who occupied these business sectors are evident throughout the table, including Dent Bros. (linked to founder Alfred Dent, after whose death donations reduced), Dodwells (of whom Stanley Dodwell served as CA chairman from 1928-30), D. Sassoons, E.D. Sassoons, the China Navigation Company and the North China Insurance Company.

Of further interest are how certain firms contributions changed over time. The Swire Group's contribution, for example, peaked towards the end of the period under consideration, and coincided with an increase of influence within the CA. ICI and the Asiatic Petroleum Company (a subsidiary of Shell) match a later change in Far Eastern market, towards the importation (though not production) of chemicals, and mirror both holding a permanent seat on later General Committees.<sup>87</sup> BAT, a hugely important and

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<sup>87</sup> See the annual reports of the CA from 1935-6 onwards, from when members of committees saw their names listed alongside the firms they directly represented. Osterhammel, 'British Business in China, 1860's-1950's' pp.204-6 notes the growth of these business sectors.

powerful firm in the East Asian trade, and again a late entrant, is similarly represented.<sup>88</sup>

It should be noted, however, that the table above does not give an entirely accurate picture of donations made by some of the larger firms. Due to the nature of British investment in China, many joint enterprises were founded with varying percentages of capital held by investing firms. The wider Jardine Matheson Group, for example, held stakes in The Canton Insurance Office, the Indo-China Steam Navigation Co., the BCC, and some twenty other firms beyond their own import and export interests—many of whom made smaller donations to the CA.<sup>89</sup> Untangling the structure of these British business groups in China is, unfortunately, a monumental task and one that has not yet been undertaken beyond single companies, and far beyond the scope of this thesis.<sup>90</sup> Regardless, these donations substantially outweighed the contributions made to the Association's funds by individual members and they seem, ultimately, to have allowed firms to buy influence within the CA to some extent.

When considered alongside the membership of the CA, the link between the CA and particular firms and interests is cemented. Several large firms and financial institutions connected to East Asia provided the majority of financial backing to the Association, with the group's membership and leadership also drawn directly from their ranks. It was these firms that combined to see the group become an active political pressure group. The effects of this, and the CA's activities, are discussed in chapter three. What is particularly interesting is that many of the firms involved were competitors. That they continued to contribute to the CA, and held key positions in it on a somewhat rotating basis, suggests that, as expressed in the Association's original objects, perhaps the social functions of the Association had done some good in persuading these men to work together for the benefit of the China trade overall. But it is perhaps also the fact that this was a small world—both one of transitory expatriates in an environment in which they were a clear minority, and one of the British trade with China more generally—that goes some way towards explaining these collective efforts. But this was not restricted to the London based membership, collaboration also found structural expression in the development of a transnational branch system.

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<sup>88</sup> Osterhammel, 'Imperialism in Transition', pp.282-3.

<sup>89</sup> Hao, *The Comprador in Nineteenth Century China*, p.23.

<sup>90</sup> Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, has been used throughout this thesis to provide guidance regarding these business groups, and is the best available study offering a comparative overview of key business groups Jardine Matheson, Swires, and Dodwells.

**Table 2.2:** Selected China Association member firms and financial contributions

source: China Association Annual Reports

\*Data Unavailable for 1930

Firm or Business Group	Periods of Funding							TOTAL (£)
	1897-1906	1907-1916	1917-1926	1927-1936*	1937-1946	1947-1956		
Swire Group	240	300	310	1180	1600	1325	4955	
HSBC	300	400	520	990	1050	1050	4310	
Chartered Bank	250	300	490	990	1050	1050	4130	
P&O	300	400	520	960	950	950	4080	
Union Insurance Office of Canton	178.75	200	385	830	1014.5	1109	3717.25	
Asiatic Petroleum Co. (shell)			420	881.4	1050	1050	3401.4	
British American Tobacco			180	1042	1050	997.5	3269.5	
Jardine Matheson	250	300	390	840	700	700	3180	
Ocean Steamship Co.	110	300	315	585	500	500	2310	
ICI				413	750	750	1913	
Dodwells	68.25	105	127	282.5	360	360	1302.75	
Paton & Baldwins					400	900	1300	
D. Sassoons	170	200	295	220	150	135	1170	
E.D. Sassoons	135	150	280	220	375		1160	
China Navigation Co.	200	300	310	280			1090	
Taikoo Sugar	200	300	310	280			1090	
Moller Line					300	750	1050	
North China Insurance Co.	157.5	156.75	156	266.25	220.5		957	
Chinese Engineering & Mining Co.			94	409	210	210	923	
Calico Printers Association					420	420	840	
Eastern Extension, Australasia & China Telegraph Co.	84	94.5	311.5	260			750	
Reiss Bros. & Co.	200	200	180	42			622	
Richardsons	100	100	180				380	
Gilman & Co.	110	100	60				270	
Dent Bros & Co.	100	100	30				230	
Indo-China Steam Navigation Co.	190						190	
China Traders Insurance	126						126	

### Asian branches

Recent work on networks that underpinned the British world has stressed that, overall, greater success was found by networks that expanded their membership effectively, and on an international basis.<sup>91</sup> For the CA, this was always the intention. Many of its individual members would have held contacts in East Asia already, especially those still active in business. However, to ensure this network was widened still further, the CA sought to incorporate voices from outside of their existing networks. Originally the Association envisioned they would do so by retaining a number of ‘corresponding Members’ to remit information from East Asia.<sup>92</sup> The minutes of the Association, however, make no reference to such members having ever been elected or fulfilling such duties, although it may be speculated that a number of members elected at the Association’s foundation, despite being resident in China, acted in this role.

With these corresponding members either non-existent, or at best limited in number, sources of information, their reliability and the identity of those making requests of the London Committee came to be a concern. In 1892 the Chairman of the CA notified the committee that, at this time, the chamber of commerce in Shanghai was chaired by an American national. Worried that a close relationship with the chamber could draw the CA into supporting American interests the CA moved to create branches open to only British subjects, to ensure they supported purely the needs of British interests.<sup>93</sup> Although this by no means represented an end to co-operation with chambers of commerce in East Asia, from this point onwards the branch structure became the key conduit through which information and cases which required the Association’s attentions flowed.

Primarily, these branches were created as a formalised link between the London committee and interests at the periphery. Branches would return information, often of a confidential nature, to the London committee, which in turn would furnish branches with the latest information from London. Indeed, it has been noted that a key characteristic of ‘trans-national social networks’ is the way in which they can generate

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<sup>91</sup> Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of people, goods and capital in the British World, 1850-1914*, p.52.

<sup>92</sup> The China Association (established 1889) Objects, rules and regulations, Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

<sup>93</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 20 January 1892, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

and deploy accurate information quickly and effectively.<sup>94</sup> In theory this formalised relationship also allowed a coherent single voice to speak for British communities and commercial interests, whose grievances or requests could then be passed on, via the London committee, to the relevant seats of power, be this the Foreign Office, Colonial Office, or MPs with whom the CA were affiliated. This section explores why these branches came to exist, how they operated within the Association's wider framework and organisational structure, at which locations they existed, and also the potential for conflict that could emerge due to differing opinions in London and in East Asia.

Following on from the chairman's concerns in 1892, an appeal was circulated by the members of the committee to their contacts and correspondents in East Asia to encourage the formation of branches in May 1892. By November their efforts had been successful, and at a meeting led by the British Consul General and CA founding member Nicholas Hannen, an executive committee was formed to oversee the creation of a Shanghai branch.<sup>95</sup> It is worthy of note, too, that the driving force behind the establishment of the Shanghai branch was John MacGregor, partner and Shanghai manager of Jardine Matheson, again emphasising the influence the company held in the CA—though as we shall see, metropole interests did not manage to easily control the will of Shanghai.<sup>96</sup> Over the next 55 years a series of branches would be formed at major centres of British population in China and Japan, the periods of activity for which are detailed in Table 2.3. By 1914 the branches would represent as many as 942 of the CA's 1,243 members.<sup>97</sup>

Whilst the establishment of these branches proved to be a key part of the Association's structure it must be noted that they were liable to lapse into inactivity. In 1901, the Yokohama branch was regarded as having been revived after an abeyance of around five years.<sup>98</sup> It was later reconstituted as a joint branch of the CA and the

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<sup>94</sup> Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of people, goods and capital in the British World, 1850-1914*, p.52.

<sup>95</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee, 24 January 1893, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>96</sup> "The Death of Mr John MacGregor" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 10 November 1893, p.12; "The Shanghai Branch of the China Association" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 02 February 1894, p.10.

<sup>97</sup> A 1914 membership list is printed in the 1914-15 annual report, supplement, pp.85-95, available at Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London. It records a total of 1,243 members, of which 75.8 per cent —942 members—resided abroad. This does, however, include the British Association of Japan, which was a linked body rather than a standard CA branch.

<sup>98</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 8 August 1901, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.



British Association of Japan. Potentially, this could have been simply an unavoidable by-product of the transient life many of these men led. The loss of an influential, driving member (or members) could prove a devastating blow for a branch, Hongkong finding in 1913 that the branch had entered a torpor when ‘both the chairman and the hon. Secretary had left the colony, at about the same time.’<sup>99</sup> General turnover

**Table 2.3:** Branches of the China Association  
source: annual reports of the China Association, 1889-1955.

Location of Branch	Years Active
Shanghai	1893-1942
Hongkong	1893-1942
Yokohama	1893-1905, 1903-1942 (as British Association of Japan)
Kobe	1899-1902, 1910-1942 (as British Association of Japan)
Tientsin	1907-1942
Hankow	1912-1942

of members due to transient life was similarly problematic. Again turning to Hongkong, in which it has been estimated that the foreign population renewed almost completely every five years, the CA branch between 1898 and 1900 saw a lapse of two years between meetings.<sup>100</sup> When a meeting was finally convened, it was found that twenty members were absent from the colony.<sup>101</sup> Disruptive events, too, could cause upset. 1917 saw Hongkong once again temporarily cease activity due to the military commitments of the community, although the London committee were unworried by this forced disruption.<sup>102</sup> The disruption of communities and communication that came with the Second World War, ultimately, saw the end of this branch structure.

<sup>99</sup> “Untitled” *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 19 July 1913, p.36. Similar problems have been noted for Scottish Ethnic Societies in East Asia, see Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.173.

<sup>100</sup> Robert Bickers, ‘Shanghailanders and Others’, p.293.

<sup>101</sup> “Untitled” *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 10 October 1900, p.18.

<sup>102</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 19 December 1917, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

### *The Purpose and functions of the branches*

With these branches accounting for more than half of the Association's membership by 1900—and as much as 75.8% by 1914—it is critical to understand their functions, although they are not the main focus of this thesis.<sup>103</sup> As noted above, they were primarily created to return information from East Asia to London, with the intention that the London Committee would pass on concerns, or recommend actions, to the relevant government departments. In urgent cases, this information was returned first by telegram, with further detail provided by a following letter. In a time of limited worldwide communication, this allowed the CA to receive information quickly and reliably from East Asia and, where the London Committee felt appropriate, liaise with the British government rapidly. Further information related to the East Asian trade, as well as reproductions of important correspondence undertaken by branches, was included in annual reports produced by the branches which were often forwarded to the London Committee.<sup>104</sup> Alongside this, a re-organisation of the London Committee was undertaken in 1927 at the suggestion of the Tientsin branch to create specific positions to be available to recently returned members from each branch, in order that they could furnish the Committee—who had potentially not been resident in East Asia for some time—with up to date information.<sup>105</sup> This combination of methods provided the CA with a powerful information gathering apparatus.

Such information could prove a valuable asset. Not only did it allow the London committee to be as up to date as possible with goings on in East Asia, it also—in theory at least—enabled them to present their views as a coherent single voice, representing both the London end of business and the communities at the periphery to the British government. Furthermore, by representing 1,000 members at various locations, the Association's political power increased. The branch system could further be valuable as a method to build a solid, trusted relationship with government departments as the CA became a source of information, through this network of contacts, for the Foreign Office itself. In this sense, the CA's branch structure was a

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<sup>103</sup> For 1900 see The China Association Annual Dinner, 7 November 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>104</sup> The first recorded example of annual reports being returned by a branch was from Shanghai, in 1899. See Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 24 July 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>105</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 10 November 1927, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

key factor in allowing the CA to develop a relationship that would place it as an ‘insider’ interest group. Worthy of note, too, is that the London Committee was not the sole recipient of this information. During the First World War, French firms in Shanghai wished to cease trading with German firms, and instead deal with their British counterparts. Applying originally to the British consul for a list of British firms, this request was then forwarded to the Shanghai branch who promptly provided this information to the French consul.<sup>106</sup>

Ultimately, these factors combined to strengthen the position of the CA as a political pressure group. But while it should be noted that establishing the coherent voice this required was often achieved, it was not always simple to do so. Sometimes branches themselves would disagree, or fail to exchange information properly, and on numerous occasions branches would express views too aggressive for the London committee to back.<sup>107</sup> In such cases, standard procedure was for the London committee to simply pass on the views of the branches to the relevant government department, whilst making no comment on the content.<sup>108</sup> On a much rarer occasion, branches would even challenge the stance of the London Committee, as we shall see below. Overall, however, the CA branch system worked well in providing the united voice and flow of information necessary to make the group a coherent political pressure group.

Whilst stressing that the branches did usually co-operate well with the London Committee, and that their main use to London was to produce an effective information gathering network, we must note they were not simply information-gathering subsidiaries. In fact, branches often acted as highly independent bodies, free from the

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<sup>106</sup> Circular to the General Committee no.189, 1 January 1915, Circulars Vol. XII, 185-200, November 1914 – January 1915, CHAS/MCP/20.

<sup>107</sup> When touring East Asia to gather information for the London Committee in 1934, for example, secretary E.M. Gull found that the Shanghai and Hongkong branches did not communicate effectively. He took the opportunity to urge upon them to exchange copies of the minutes of meetings, whilst also agreeing that the London committee would, in the future, send any material to both branches rather than one or the other. See China Association (Hongkong Branch) minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 15 March 1935, General Committee Papers, April 1935 – December 1935, CHAS/MCP/40, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>108</sup> For example, when a Butterfield and Swire’s steamer service was opposed by the Chinese government in 1900 as the ships being used were of a type not permitted by treaty (‘sea-going’ vessels were not permitted to traverse inland waters) Swires and the Shanghai branch wished for further claims to be made against the Chinese government. Despite JH Scott (of John Swire & Sons) agreeing with their views, the chairman and the rest of the committee ultimately decided the calls from Swires and the Shanghai branch were not fairly grounded—they believed the ships to be sea going and noted that they even ‘occasionally rode out typhoons’. They therefore passed on Shanghai’s telegram ‘without comment.’ See Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 10 May 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

constraint of London and only earning a rebuke if they strayed far from the Association's overall goals. In doing so branches often attempted to solve problems and flex their political muscles of their own accord. In a response to increasing piracy in 1906 around Hongkong the CA branch chairman was invited to a meeting with the Governor and Consul-General to discuss the creation of a foreign police force to be used to counter the problem.<sup>109</sup> In 1924, once again worried about rising piracy, the Shanghai branch hosted a luncheon with senior Royal Navy members as the guests of honour at which they requested more be done to increase the security of the China Coast waters.<sup>110</sup> Similarly, one new British minister in Peking, Claude MacDonald, having been dined before his departure in 1896 by the London branch of the CA, gave his first speech on arrival in China at a luncheon hosted by the CA Shanghai branch.<sup>111</sup> Such speeches could gain fairly wide prominence in newspapers, both in Britain and East Asia. When Lord Charles Beresford—the 'plain—speaking sailor MP'—gave a particularly emphatic speech to the Shanghai branch it was reported on in *The Times*, *The Dundee Courier*, *The Morning Post*, *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, *The Hampshire/Portsmouth Telegraph*, *Bristol Mercury*, *Standard and Glasgow Herald*.<sup>112</sup> Similarly, some reports of annual meetings of the Hongkong and Shanghai branches were reprinted in the *Far Eastern Review*.<sup>113</sup>

Dinners were also held by branches for social reasons, much in the same vein as the London branch, and proved highly congenial affairs.<sup>114</sup> They also formed subcommittees to solve particular problems, with the most prominent the Shanghai

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<sup>109</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/183/46, John Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, 17 November 1916.

<sup>110</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 6 February 1924, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>111</sup> "Daily Notes" *York Herald* (York, England), 13 May 1896.

<sup>112</sup> It was *The Hampshire/Portsmouth Telegraph* that coined the Phrase 'plain—speaking Sailor M.P.' in their "Digest of the Week" *Hampshire/Portsmouth Telegraph* (Leeds, England), 26 November 1898. For the other newspapers see "Lord Charles Beresford on China" *Times* (London, England), 21 November 1898, p.7. "Lord Charles Beresford" *Dundee Courier* (Dundee, Scotland), 21 November 1898. "The Integrity of China" *Morning Post* (London, England), 21 November 1898. "The Powers and China" *Standard* (London, England), 21 November 1898. "Britain's Interests in China" *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough* (Middlesbrough, England), 21 November 1898. "The Imperial Pilgrim" *Bristol Mercury* (Bristol, England), 21 November 1898. "The Powers and China" *Standard* (London, England), 21 November 1898. "Third Edition" *Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), 21 November 1898. Beresford's own view from his trip to China, as well as the resolutions of a meeting he held with the CA Hongkong Branch are to be found in his, *The Break-up of China: With an account of its present commerce, currency, waterways, armies, railways, politics and future prospects* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1899).

<sup>113</sup> "The China Association" *The Far Eastern Review* (Manila, Philippines), Vol IV, no. 12, 1908. "The Kowloon—Canton Railway" *The Far Eastern Review* (Manila, Philippines), Vol V, no. 10, 1909.

<sup>114</sup> The annual report of 1901, for example, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03, contains records of dinners undertaken by several branches in this year.

branch World War One volunteer subcommittee, the efforts of which are detailed elsewhere in this thesis. Branches could also form or work with existing bodies independently of London in order to attempt to stimulate British trade with China and East Asia. For the Tientsin branch, this resulted in the creation of a separate ‘trade association’ which would be linked to the branch, though an independent body. Emphasising the independence branches could display, Tientsin refused to agree with the London Committee the content of correspondence sent to public bodies, fearing its independence would be compromised.<sup>115</sup> Featuring much more prominently in CA records, however, was the merger undertaken by the Shanghai branch in 1926 (though first considered in 1923) with the Shanghai British Chamber of Commerce to form a single amalgamated body.<sup>116</sup> This not only emphasised the role branches could play independently, but also the steps taken by the CA to bring other groups under its influence and into its networks, further strengthening its claim to speak for numerous and wide ranging interests and groups in East Asia.

At the most basic structural level, then, the London headquarters acted as a central focal point, with organisational matters undertaken by the committees there. Providing an active information network in China, whilst still acting independently, the Asian branches of the Association were in many ways self-contained, while adhering, overall, to the remit of the CA. Yet while this branch system was largely stable, useful and well-liked, it could cause problems. After all, the branches did not exist purely to remit information—the interests they represented wished, too, to hold a voice at the metropole, and relied upon London to provide this for them. This is best shown by a detailed investigation of the relationship between the Shanghai branch and London Committee, as problems emerged regarding the Association’s structure, methods and overall direction. Periphery based firms raised grievances through representatives, and individuals, too, who held prominent roles in within the Shanghai branch attempted to wield this power to further their own goals. At its heart, much of this dispute originated in the differing aims of expatriate companies based in London and Hongkong, and those settler companies based in Shanghai. But such disputes

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<sup>115</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 October 1915, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>116</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the Committee, 29 May 1923, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6; Annual report for 1926-7, pp.xx-xxi, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08.

retained potential to draw firms who were usually co-operative into disagreement, threatening to disrupt the core base of the CA, as we shall see.

### **Metropole-periphery conflict and oligarchy in the CA**

Even at its inception, the CA's usefulness was questioned by the wider Shanghai community. The *North China Herald* thought its foundation unnecessary with 'the existing machinery [for applying political pressure]... sufficient, if it is kept properly at work', and complained that the best men would be unlikely to join, being too pre-occupied with their own business.<sup>117</sup> Despite this uneasy start, by 1893 the formation of a branch in Shanghai was praised in the same paper, with the assertion that 'when the Association is known to comprise all, or a very large proportion of British residents concerned in Eastern commerce, it will acquire a political and commercial status of very considerable importance to all of us.'<sup>118</sup> In essence, this view summed up the connection between the CA committees in London and Shanghai. If all interests were represented an interdependent relationship, productive for both sides, could overcome the tensions of Settler and Expatriate disputes. This was not to be, however, and conflict over representation would surface repeatedly, and was never truly resolved. The first, and most public conflict occurred in the early twentieth century, and revolved ostensibly around the methods the CA employed to apply political pressure, although deeper disputes were certainly in play.

The first indication of this conflict came in July 1900. In the pages of *The North China Herald* it was mentioned there was 'friction' between the Shanghai and London branches, with Shanghai 'urging steps which the somewhat comatose home committee has regarded as being indecently vigorous.'<sup>119</sup> A sudden call for increased action was no surprise. The Boxer uprising was in full swing by this time, with the London *Daily Mail* announcing in the same month—erroneously, and in 'gruesome detail'—that hundreds of foreigners had been killed, bringing an end to the siege of the legation quarter in Peking.<sup>120</sup> Suddenly, China was thrust to the forefront of public imagination,

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<sup>117</sup>These complaints included assertions that the CA would be overly aggressive and risk attracting the ire of the British authorities, and would be formed of men of little ability, with those of importance to the China trade too busy to undertake voluntary membership of the Association. See "The Proposed China Association" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 05 November 1889, p.3.

<sup>118</sup> "The China Association" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 01 January 1893, p.3.

<sup>119</sup> "Untitled" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 25 July 1900, p.9.

<sup>120</sup> Diana Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion: The dramatic story of China's war on foreigners that shook the world in the summer of 1900* (New York: Walker and Company, 1999), prologue, p.ix.

and discussions were made regarding the extension of the CA's methods, the association wondering if it could now hope to appeal to the wider British population. Some members, including influential secretary R.S. Gundry, supported the idea of a change.<sup>121</sup> Acting with often displayed caution, however, the CA decided this was impractical, and instead these wishes culminated in the formation of the 'China League' a body which was to undertake the 'steps' that the CA would not. These were, specifically, to educate the wider public on Chinese questions through 'popular addresses, pamphlets, etc.' alongside which links would be forged to MPs. By combining these two methods, it was hoped that the British government might be persuaded to take a stronger position in diplomacy with China, especially in light of the current ongoing conflict, protecting existing treaty rights, and supporting a progressive Chinese government.<sup>122</sup> The China League was to be a body open to a much wider membership than the CA, and this too contributed to the CA's decision to stay separate from the body, fearing such expansion would alter the character of their annual dinners in a negative manner and render the committee less efficient due to increased size.<sup>123</sup> 1901 saw continued complaint, with the Shanghai and Hongkong branches accusing the CA of taking an overly cautious stance in various matters so as not to upset the Foreign Office.<sup>124</sup>

By 1905, the situation had progressed. The Shanghai branch believed that since the signing of 'the treaty of Shanghai', and the increase of public interest in China in light of the 'Manchurian question', both the CA and the China League lacked impetus and clear aims.<sup>125</sup> They therefore expressed the view that the aims of the two would be better served were they to re-amalgamate, with the CA taking up 'the League's policy of propagandism' and requested that the London committee lay this proposal in front of the wider membership of the Association. Deciding that the CA was better served by continuing to act alone, the London Committee ignored this request.

Although the Shanghai branch respected the committee's decision, they became aggrieved when London refused to bring the question before the wider

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<sup>121</sup> For an earlier, and more detailed in some respects, survey of the split to form the china league, and for the 1905 dispute, see Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, chapter 9. Pelcovits investigations, however, end in 1906 and were made without access to some sources and so, although incredibly detailed, present an incomplete picture.

<sup>122</sup> "A China League" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 08 August 1900, p.43.

<sup>123</sup> Annual report for 1900-01, pp.xv-xvii, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03.

<sup>124</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.275.

<sup>125</sup> "The China Association" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 15 January 1904, p.11.

membership. Such was the severity of the disagreement that while on leave in Britain two Shanghai committee members, John Otway Percy Bland and Charles John Dudgeon, took to discuss the matter with the London committee.<sup>126</sup> In front of the General Committee they set out their grievances, namely the repeated ignorance of their proposals by London, as well as what they saw as an ineffective London committee more dedicated to its social arrangements than to applying political pressure. Alongside this Shanghai representative J.O.P Bland argued that, as a man currently and heavily involved in the China trade, London chairman William Keswick could not criticise the Foreign Office for fear of damaging his own firm's (Jardine Matheson) prospects and should step down from the role. Were major changes not undertaken, they threatened, the Shanghai branch would be forced to split from the Association.<sup>127</sup>

Pelcovits, in his earlier work on the CA, has framed this dispute as one based upon whether the CA would represent, in the future, purely metropole interests—large mercantile and shipping firms and banks—or those of the whole of the British community in China.<sup>128</sup> Greater light is shed upon this matter—and the direction Shanghai wished London to pursue—by investigation into Shanghai's representatives. Bland was the current secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Council, an expansionist imperialist and activist journalist, who believed the Shanghai Settlement and its council to be 'the best British assets in the Yangtze Valley.'<sup>129</sup> He was also unhappy that Keswick had recently pushed for French involvement in development of British Railway Concessions, an aim pursued through the joint HSBC and Jardine Matheson led BCC.<sup>130</sup> Bland found an unexpected ally in Charles Addis of the HSBC, recently promoted to head of the London Branch and HSBC representative on the BCC board, who similarly disliked Keswick's actions (as, too, did the Foreign Office). Seeing this temporary dispute of usual staunch CA allies Jardine Matheson and the HSBC, he may have been emboldened to push for the CA to remove Keswick, and seek leaders who

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<sup>126</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, pp.296-8.

<sup>127</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 July 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

<sup>128</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, pp.293-5, notes that the major metropole based interest was, at this time, the BCC.

<sup>129</sup> Robert Bickers, 'Bland, John Otway Percy (1863–1945)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31920>, last accessed 13 October 2017).

<sup>130</sup> Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.98-99.



backed purely British schemes.<sup>131</sup> These combined to give Bland three likely goals; protection of Shanghai based interests by Britain from Chinese interests, a more aggressive CA stance when dealing with the British government, and an end to co-operation with other international interests.<sup>132</sup> If Jardine Matheson domination within the CA could be broken by the removal of Keswick, and a more aggressive CA encouraged by a merger with the China League, Bland would have been pleased.

Less clear are the motives of C.J. Dudgeon. As a founding member of the China league in 1900 he held the opinion that the CA should take a more forthright stance when applying political pressure.<sup>133</sup> As head of Shanghai based firm Ilbert & Co., he too, as we shall see, wished to see greater representation of settler interests in the CA, with less control given to large, expatriate, multinational firms—although this was never stated publically in direct terms.<sup>134</sup>

Eventually, a Special General Meeting was called for 31 July 1905, at which the matter would be laid before the body of members. Although the record of the meeting is no longer held in the CA archives, Pelcovits notes that it failed to arouse much interest amongst the membership—attendance was at most around 18 per cent, and potentially lower—and the prevailing view of those that did attend backed the current direction of the CA in London and believed the personal attacks on William Keswick to be totally unjustified.<sup>135</sup>

Ultimately, calling a SGM achieved little. However, London was not prepared to lose the Shanghai branch. The CA was, after all, a political pressure group, and the

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p.99.

<sup>132</sup> J.O.P. Bland is a well known figure from the history of British interests in China. He began his career in the customs service, before becoming involved with the Shanghai Municipal Council and emerging as a defender of settler interests. He later undertook work for the BCC, under the leadership of William Keswick, the man he attacked in the episode recounted above. He is best remembered for his histories of China, written with Edmund Backhouse, which, ultimately, were discredited due to the use of forged documents. See Bickers, 'Bland, John Otway Percy (1863–1945)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>133</sup> "A China League" *North China Herald*.

<sup>134</sup> C.J. Dudgeon was head of the Shanghai firm Ilbert and co, see Arnold Wright, ed., *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China* (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Company, Ltd., 1908), p.208. He had, notably, helped to negotiate the new commercial treaty following the Boxer Crisis, as Thomas Sutherland noted when speaking at the dinner of the CA in 1901. For a report of the function see Annual dinner, 11 November 1901, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3. His official role in negotiations had been that of 'assistant commissioner.' See Edward Walford, *Walford's County Families of the United Kingdom*, p.351.

<sup>135</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.297 records that Fewer than 50 members attended. Extrapolating from the subscriptions the CA received for the year in absence of a membership list, the most accurate figure that can be given for membership of the London branch for the year is 267, giving a turnout of at most 18.73 per cent.

larger the size of the body, the greater the potential political influence. Faced with the continued threat of defection, the CA chose to make concessions. Chairman William Keswick resigned and was replaced, and the AGM took the decision to allow the matter to rest, with all pulling together for the good of the Association and its aims.<sup>136</sup> By 1907 *The North China Herald* could report that the CA had become more active in publically publishing reports and correspondence.<sup>137</sup> In the end, this seems to have been enough to placate the branch alongside efforts to limit the terms of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to ensure a wider selection of Association members' views were heard—although Pelcovits also notes a re-organisation of the branch committee was encouraged by London to make it more compliant.<sup>138</sup>

Although exact concessions agreed at the private meeting were not recorded, it is unlikely to be coincidental that only a few years later C.J. Dudgeon returned to London from China, and took up the post of chairman of the CA's London committee. Although at the AGM it was noted he had retired from the trade and had therefore, supposedly, been elected due to the amount of time he could lend to leading the Association (one of Bland's criticisms of Keswick) he still held his previous aims, as we shall see. Finally, it seemed, settler interests in Shanghai would gain the representation they sought from London, however this did not materialise. Even when holding the most powerful position in the CA, Dudgeon found his aims blocked. In 1909 in a series of letters he lamented to Bland—who had since gained, and lost, employment working for the BCC—that he believed that the CA would still be best served by adopting 'the policy of publicity pressure' but could see 'no possibility' as to how to implement this.<sup>139</sup> The CA did not have the money and regardless, he could not exercise a strong enough grasp over the Association's direction anyway. He had, he told Bland, tried his utmost but was left to lament 'Good God, my dear chap, what

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<sup>136</sup> Annual General Meeting, 27 March 1906, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

<sup>137</sup> "A China Association Report" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 11 January 1907, p.4.

<sup>138</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.298, notes this. For the original see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 September 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

<sup>139</sup> For Bland's removal—caused by a combination of the HSBC moving towards international co-operation in China, and his own failings including losing British interests a concession, see Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance*, pp.100-101 and pp.136-7; and Clarence B Davis, 'Financing Imperialism: British and American Bankers as Vectors of Imperial Expansion in China, 1908-1920' *The Business History Review*, 56, 2 (East Asian Business History, 1982), pp.244-6. For the letter itself see C.J. Dudgeon to J.O.P. Bland, 30 November 1909, J.O.P. Bland Collection, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, 'In Correspondence', Box 12, 13, 14 (Microfilm Reel 9).

is the use of attempting anything in the C.A. as long as the HSBC and JM and Co—backed up by the FO in ‘things Chinese’—are the predominant partners’ (underlining in original text).<sup>140</sup>

By this point the HSBC and Jardine Matheson (and the Foreign Office) once again found themselves co-operating to ensure British policy in China progressed smoothly. William Keswick may himself have felt rather aggrieved as British efforts moved towards international co-operation, as the HSBC and Charles Addis led an international consortium (including French interests) for the development of China.<sup>141</sup> The chance for Bland, Dudgeon and Shanghai to press their claims and split the CA’s key expatriate backers had passed.

A final effort came early in 1910, when J.O.P. Bland attended the CA’s AGM and again put forward an amendment to urge ‘the adoption of greater activity and publicity by the Association.’ Although Dudgeon backed this from his position as chairman the amendment was rejected by the committee by ‘a small majority after considerable discussion.’<sup>142</sup> Fighting against the combined influence, it seems, that Jardine Matheson and the HSBC could muster amongst the committee, settler aims were once again blocked, and expatriate interests retained control. Adding insult to injury for Bland, the committee at the same meeting then elected William Keswick, the source of much of his original ire, to be president of the Association for the upcoming year.<sup>143</sup>

That the two groups of settlers and expatriates continued to co-exist somewhat uneasily within the CA is shown in the diaries of HSBC head Charles Addis. He noted that while the speech he gave at the CA’s annual dinner of 1910 was largely ‘well received’, J.O.P Bland met his gaze ‘with a stony stare.’<sup>144</sup> This must, of course, be placed in wider context of the dispute between the two—it was Addis who had given Bland employment with the BCC, and then removed him from his post.<sup>145</sup> However that the two were present at the same social gathering underlines firstly that despite

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<sup>140</sup> C.J. Dudgeon to J.O.P. Bland, 15 December 1909, J.O.P. Bland Collection, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, ‘In Correspondence’, Box 12, 13, 14 (Microfilm Reel 9).

<sup>141</sup> Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance*, pp.67-113.

<sup>142</sup> “Pessimistic Speeches” *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 22 April 1910, p.8. A detailed report of the meeting is in the annual report for 1910-11, supplement pp.1-16, available at Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06.

<sup>143</sup> Annual report for 1910-11, supplement pp.1-16, available at Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06.

<sup>144</sup> Diary, 1910 - London, Scotland, Europe and North Africa, PP MS 14/001/028, Papers of Sir Charles Stewart Addis, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>145</sup> Bickers, ‘Bland, John Otway Percy (1863–1945)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

their disagreements settler and expatriate interests had to at least make an effort to co-operate within the CA, for the good of the British trade as a whole. Secondly, it hints at the importance of the CA's social functions, with the two men both continuing to attend what was the only China dinner extant in Britain—this is discussed in much greater depth in chapter three.

Indeed, further study in chapter three suggests that London did make some concessions in the years following 1905, and that Dudgeon's feelings were perhaps an overreaction. The CA under Dudgeon's leadership was certainly more aggressive when calling for Shanghai settlement extension. But it is clear that first, he did not achieve all he had hoped, and secondly, that normality resumed fairly quickly. Despite Frederick Anderson (also of Ilbert & Co., and previously chairman of the SMC) following Dudgeon as chairman by 1911 the role was held by George Jamieson.<sup>146</sup> Although he had been a founder of the China League, he was also a representative of the BCC, and potentially a candidate who would placate both sides. When the role then returned for seven years to F. Anderson in 1913, this was to ensure stability, and due to a lack of elections, during the war period. Immediately following this the role returned to Jardine Matheson and its subsidiaries. They would hold the chairmanship for 12 of the next 15 years, with multinational firm Dodwells serving in the short three-year interregnum.<sup>147</sup>

In the end, the settler revolt led from Shanghai in 1905 had failed for two reasons. First, the CA London committee was in fact oligarchic. It represented the largest British interests in China, who chose co-operation with the Foreign Office over conflict. Outsiders such as Bland and Dudgeon could not challenge this alone, and would have required the support of a great deal of the wider membership. Secondly, for the large majority of members in London this oligarchy was not a problem. They did not attend AGM's or SGM's, did not vote for their officers and, simply, they did not care for politics. As discussed in chapter three they in fact joined for the social gatherings that had, in 1905, been one of Shanghai's grievances, and had little time for complaints regarding the direction and operation of the CA beyond these events.

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<sup>146</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, p.83.

<sup>147</sup> For the extension of Andersons role see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 11 May 1920, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5. For his link to Ilbert & Co. see Wright, (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China*, p.608. The other chairs of the Association are listed in appendix D.

1905, however, was not to be the only occasion on which these interests clashed within the CA. Methods continued to be questioned by Shanghai, with *The North China Herald* referring to the CA in London in 1918 as ‘a little too cautiously diplomatic’.<sup>148</sup> Disputes resurfaced more prominently when British interests as a whole in China realigned in the aftermath of the events of 30 May 1925, and settler and expatriate groups once again clashed—though this time in private—regarding the direction of the CA.

By 1930, A.W. Burkill notified the London Committee that the branch was ‘discouraged at the frequency with which their representations were over ruled’, yet the only suggestion to alleviate this was to pass Shanghai’s views to the Foreign Office ‘though not necessarily with London’s support’, something commonly undertaken anyway both before and after this appeal.<sup>149</sup> As the decade continued, matters did not improve. Soon after Shanghai came to believe that the London committee had, once again, become out of touch with the needs of the British community in China. With Chinese nationalism growing, and the British government moving to remove unequal treaties and extraterritoriality and normalise diplomacy, they called for changes to be made to the committee. They hoped for inclusion of a greater number of men recently retired from Shanghai, better able to represent their current interests and to oppose this change of policy.

Unfortunately for the Shanghai branch they had misjudged the mood of the CA in London, who were in fact supportive of the government’s stance. Reminiscent of 1905 the London committee all but ignored this request, and instead made superficial compromises to retain the support of settler interests, while continuing to offer the majority of the CA’s support to the government’s aims. The CA secretary contacted S.F. Mayers of the BCC privately, and the two agreed to undertake a reorganisation of the committee—on their own terms—in collaboration with the Swire Group. Agreeing that ‘the most important business organizations in China have their Head Offices in the United Kingdom or Hongkong’ they decided the CA should back these firms, who were ‘opposed to any policy liable to involve this country in trouble with China of the nature experienced in 1925-26’ instead of ‘local interests [who] regard themselves as being on the defensive, and are opposed to changes liable to weaken what may be

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<sup>148</sup> “The China Tea Question” *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 18 May. 1918, p.29.

<sup>149</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 23 July 1930, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

described as their residential status.’<sup>150</sup> A decision was taken to bring more active men into the committee, but to ensure they represented these expatriate, multinational interests, who both aligned with British government policy and besides provided the CA with the majority of its funding. In order to ensure that settler interests were somewhat placated, they were to be backed in the matter of the ‘district court question’ as this was seen as a matter which was not particularly inflammatory.<sup>151</sup> Once again, the major firms behind the CA were able to exercise control, and offered enough compromise to placate the Shanghai branch, and ensure a split in the Association was avoided.

Control continued to rest with a combination of the Swire Group and Jardine Matheson interests 15 years later. When determining a response to the Shameen riots—a Chinese crowd having wrecked the British consulate, alongside Swires’ and Reuters’ offices—the secretary of the CA drafted a letter to be sent to the Foreign Office. This was then forwarded to W.J. Keswick of Matheson and Co. and Sir John R. Masson of Swires. Both offered comments and the CA secretary produced a ‘composite edition’ to be sent to the British authorities.<sup>152</sup> It seems that by this late date of 1948, these two interests—the Swire and Jardine Matheson Group—were on occasion even bypassing the committee structure of the CA.

Ultimately, these disputes raise several key points about the CA which establish clearly that the Association was an oligarchic body, which represented the interests of ‘Gentlemanly Capitalists’ and expatriate firms. Periphery settler interests sought to influence the London committee to attain a voice at the metropole, but they failed. In this way, the wider transnational network that the CA embodied was closely controlled by the body’s Associational structure. For the wider membership in London this oligarchy was not a problem. In a sense, indeed, the London membership were, themselves, two disparate bodies of membership. Those still linked to China Politics and commerce, the gentlemanly capitalists who directed the Association, and those

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<sup>150</sup> E.M. Gull to G.W. Swire, 27 June 1933, Letters from E.M. Gull Secretary, London Director’s Political Correspondence, JSS/1/3/14/12, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive, SOAS Library, University of London. Firms relocating to Hongkong continued throughout the 1930’s and the run up to the Second World War, as nationalist fervour continued to grow, as noted in Bickers, *Out of China*, p.231.

<sup>151</sup> E.M. Gull to G.W. Swire, 27 June 1933, Letters from E.M. Gull Secretary, London Director’s Political Correspondence, JSS/1/3/14/12, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive.

<sup>152</sup> For a contemporary report on the riot see “Chinese Wreck Consulate in Mob Riots at Canton” *The Advocate* (Tasmania), 17 January. For the CA’s response see G.E. Mitchell O.B.E. to Sir John R. Masson and W.J. Keswick Esq., 21 January 1948, China Association Bulletins and Circulars, JSS/11/5/2/1/, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive.

who joined only for social functions. That the committee would claim publicly to represent the will of these men who paid no attention to politics seems not to have bothered them in the least. How this predisposition for big business interests to control the CA affected its political and commercial aims is investigated in the next chapter, as are the Association's efforts to provide the social functions required to ensure that the wider, British-based, membership who cared little for China politics and commerce felt they were receiving value for their subscriptions.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has sought to provide that background knowledge key to understanding the operations of the CA by examining its set-up and membership. We can see from both the background of the original individual membership, makeup of committees and from the donations provided by corporate members that the CA was an oligarchic body, which represented the interests of 'gentlemanly capitalists' and expatriate firms. These interests could be challenged by periphery, or settler, interests through the wider network provided by the CA's branch structure, but branches quickly found that the CA was a subscriber democracy in name alone, being reduced to, at best, superficial control and minor input on the direction of the Association. This predisposition for big business interests to control the CA affected a large proportion of the Association's subsequent aims and objectives, and will be a subject throughout the remainder of the thesis.

Ultimately, however, the CA needed to retain its periphery links if it was to be a body that appeared truly representative of the British community in China, and we shall see further benefits that the Association's branch structure brought in the following chapters. To this end, the headquarters and branches settled their differences—at least to the extent required to co-exist in the CA. Beyond this distinction of metropole and periphery however, the CA saw a further split between those who had returned from East Asia and retired and those who had returned to active employment and filled the Association's committees. These men were also required by the Association if it was to generate an appearance of a widely representative body, and, with little interest in politics, symptomatic, as we shall see, of a wider loss of links to networks involving East Asia, the Association had to offer them a reason to continue their membership. This came in the form of social functions, and these too are discussed in the following chapter.

In that sense the CA was successful in generating an image of a body that was inclusive of the whole of the British presence resident in China—excluding, of course, the Women and Eurasians that we would not expect to be present in the membership due to wider trends. But this was indeed only an image. In reality the London committee was controlled for the whole of the period under study by the interests of a narrow consortium of multinational firms from the realms of trading, finance and shipping. The following two chapters will discuss the CA's three main objects; sociability, political involvement, and charity and benevolence, and show how these were all exploited for the promotion of expatriate, multinational business based in London or Hongkong.



## CHAPTER 3

### POLITICS, SOCIABILITY, AND NETWORKS

‘The peculiarity of the China Association is, though we work very hard, as our reports will testify, I think we also all love a dinner.’<sup>1</sup> This was how, at a 1906 dinner given in honour of Duke Tsai Tze, CA founder Alfred Dent outlined the Association’s commitment to holding social gatherings, whilst also pursuing its other objects through ‘hard work’. The need for Dent to make such a statement only a year after the Shanghai branch had insisted ‘the social side of our Association’s work [should] be subordinated to the active promotion’ of British interests in China as part of its complaints that led to its 1905 revolt, is perhaps understandable.<sup>2</sup> Dent was offering an olive branch to Shanghai, to ensure the Association could once again function smoothly.

To view the social gatherings of the Association as something that occurred in isolation from its other aims, as both Dent and the representative of the Shanghai branch had, however, would be to ignore their wider potential importance. Dent’s statement was in itself political, if only dealing with the limited scope of the internal politics of the Association. Indeed, these two objects of the CA were often co-dependent, with social events a political tool for the Association—albeit one that can be hard to discern as such given much of the focus were conversations hidden from the record. Still, it is critical to explore social events as key opportunities to exert political influence and allow networking. Before this can be investigated, however, it is necessary to first outline the form these social gatherings took, and how they changed throughout the period under consideration. This chapter will then focus upon the social benefits of these gatherings, and then how they were exploited for political means. Finally, it will look at some of the other methods the CA utilised to attempt to attain its political goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Interim Annual report for 1906, pp.126-35, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 July 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

### **The China Association's social gatherings**

The social functions hosted by the CA can be divided into four categories. Originally, the Association sought to host annual formal dinners, to which members and guests were invited. Alongside this, a second type of formal dinner was inaugurated in 1896 to host a prominent individual connected to East Asia who would attend as a guest of honour. Later, the Association added to these events a more informal reception open to a wider range of members, guests and ladies, and finally, towards the end of the period covered here, small luncheons were held to allow members of the committee to meet with prominent individuals connected to East Asia. These dinners, receptions and luncheons had their own specific nuances and history, and are discussed individually.

#### *Formal Dinners*

Of the CA's social events, the longest running—though not necessarily the best attended—were the series of formal dinners held at least once a year from the Association's inception in 1889 to 1913, when they were interrupted by the First World War, to then be held again from 1919 to 1938, except in the years of 1931 and 1937.<sup>3</sup> They were then again interrupted by war, with only one further dinner held, in 1952, in the period under consideration. These dinners consisted, as noted, of two types of events: annual dinners and dinners held in honour of men with prominent links to Asia. Both followed, however, the same structure and, in form, were almost indistinguishable, and are thus grouped together for analysis.

Attendance at these events was a source of pride for the CA and from its first annual dinner held in 1890, which saw 96 guests attend, numbers grew rapidly with between 220 and 278 guests at the annual dinners between 1899 and 1912. Although numbers were recorded with less frequency after the First World War, the popularity

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<sup>3</sup> The CA seem to have had little enthusiasm for a dinner in 1937. Although a room was reserved at Grosvenor house and a date fixed by September, the Association was behind schedule with all other preparations. The committee was split as to whether it was 'desirable' to hold a dinner 'in the circumstances occasioned by the conflict between China and Japan' and ultimately no function was held. Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 22 September 1937, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7. Whether dinners were held for the other years mentioned has been ascertained using the Association's annual reports.

of this function remained consistent, with attendance never dropping below 180.<sup>4</sup> Lower attendance was recorded at dinners given to prominent individuals, the reasons for which are discussed later.

The format of the dinners saw the evening divided into two distinct parts. The first included a series of toasts given and speeches made, similar to other formal dinners. Though a standard of formal dinners, such toasts nonetheless served to reinforce the identity of Associations and gatherings, and even display particular loyalties.<sup>5</sup> For the CA they began with the 'loyal toasts' to the current monarch and royal family, followed by toasts to the armed forces—a group to whom China residents felt a particular affinity—and if present, to the guest of honour. These toasts were responded to by those best qualified for the purpose—often an admiral for the armed forces, for example, and on one occasion by HRH Prince George for the royal family—with the responder usually giving a speech outlining his views on the current status of China, its politics and development, and the current position of the British government.<sup>6</sup> A toast of 'prosperity to the China Association' came next, responded to by a prominent member of the body who would outline the Association's activities

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<sup>4</sup> These numbers are drawn from various locations within the China Association collection, SOAS. In some cases, minute books of the Association contain dinner reports cut from the *London and China Telegraph* which mention attendance, in other dinner attendance figures are raised in the minutes, or simply recorded by the Association. Other numbers are drawn from the annual reports of the Association, which later also carried reproductions of press coverage of the dinners. Although attendance numbers never dropped below 180, worries of the Committee regarding attendance surfaced in 1935, as attendance had reduced from earlier functions. Several suggestions as to why this was were considered, including that 'older members were dropping out and the younger men were not interested.' When compared to the popularity of the more informal Association receptions which started around this time, discussed below, it seems plausible that this reduction was indeed linked to changing tastes in social function amongst the members of the Association. See Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 10 December 1935, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of this occurring amongst early 19<sup>th</sup> C. radicals and loyalists see James Epstein, 'Radical Dining, Toasting and Symbolic Expression in Early Nineteenth-Century Lancashire: Rituals of Solidarity', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 20, 2 (Summer 1988), pp.271-91.

<sup>6</sup> HRH Prince George's attendance at the 1929 dinner marked the only occasion on which the China Association entertained royalty. He responded to the toast for the royal family, before proposing the toast to the China Association. His own connection to China, he admitted, was only two years spent serving on HMS Hawkins in Chinese waters between 1925 and 1927. However, as he himself remarked, the dinner also provided him a useful opportunity to fulfil a 'desire to become better acquainted with the origin and distribution of trade which goes to enrich the Empire, and to make the acquaintance of men who shoulder heavy responsibilities, which in good and evil times, are necessary to keep our ship of commerce afloat.' See the annual report for 1929-30, appendix, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

and views on key matters from the previous year.<sup>7</sup> Finally, toasts were made to the other guests attending and to the officers of the Association.

Although the speeches remained largely serious in content there was scope for deviation to make the evening more humanised. A sense of community was certainly displayed—and likely reinforced by the sharing of memory—when remembrance was paid to recently deceased friends from East Asia. ‘Corney’ Thorne and ‘Bob’ Little were fondly remembered, through the use of these distinctly informal terms in 1906.<sup>8</sup> The following year saw the speaker reminisce of ‘Johnny Dodd, pioneer of the tea trade in Formosa, and joint hero... in rescuing the wrecked crew of the *Adèle* at Kelung’, ‘John Walter... with whom I remember crossing from Nagasaki to Shanghai more than 40 years ago’, and, retaining his formal title, ‘Sir Thomas Hanbury, with whom I remember walking to Honkew to select a site for a school which now bears his name.’<sup>9</sup> The ability of the speaker to draw on so many nicknames and recall personal reminiscences for so many of these men attests to the closeness of many of the British community in East Asia in the nineteenth century.

Perhaps also indicative of a sense of community, the humour that often found its way into speeches and was usually self-deprecating of the British presence in China, and critically aware of some of their own weaknesses. Former Consul Byron Brenan on two separate occasions lamented the lack of British knowledge of the

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<sup>7</sup> Focusing again upon the 1929 dinner, Stanley H. Dodwell responded to the toast proposed by HRH Prince George. Having praised the prince for his willingness to attend, Dodwell then covered a wide range of topics. He assured members that the Association continued to promote trade and keep links to East Asia, through ‘vast numbers of telegrams’, ‘committee meetings’ and ‘personal interviews’, alongside its social events. He then gave his opinion of the current political situation in China: That the Nationalist government were attempting to unify the country, but meeting significant resistance, which He lamented disrupted trade for ‘us poor merchants.’ Furthermore, he criticised that the lack of foresight of manufacturers—who built machines that would last ten years, but would be out of date technologically in five—making the job of distributors such as himself difficult. He closed the economic section of his speech on an optimistic note, however: He believed a country the size of China, with ‘400,000,000 industrious people’ could not fail to be ‘one of the best, if not the best, prospects for the solution of our unemployment and post war problems.’ He ended on a political note, encouraging members of the Foreign Office (of which there were several present) to go themselves to China, and experience the state of British trade first hand. See the annual report for 1929-30, appendix, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

<sup>8</sup> See the annual report for 1906-07, appendix p.56, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05. ‘Corney’ Thorne was, presumably, Cornelius, head of Thorne. Brothers & Co. of Shanghai. See Richard J. Smith, *Robert Hart and China’s Early Modernization: His Journals, 1863-1866* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), p.433, note 76. Robert ‘Bob’ Little was editor for the *North China Daily News* and *Herald*, served as chairman of the SMC for which he oversaw the construction of a new waterworks, and led an electric lighting company in Shanghai. A prominent member of Shanghai society, he was also known as ‘Uncle Bob’, and ‘famous for knowing everyone and never having a harsh word said about him’, see French, *Through the Looking Glass*, p.58.

<sup>9</sup> Annual report for 1907-08, appendix p.97, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

Chinese language by repeating a story of a CA member forced to draw on a wall to order breakfast—he drew, and received, a chicken, despite in actual fact wanting an egg.<sup>10</sup> The assembled guests were similarly amused at their own expense when told in 1908, that had Japanese customs been followed on the evening, attendance to the dinner would have seen ‘the warriors come first, the agriculturalists second, and down away below stairs I think, some-where out by the back door... the merchants and traders.’<sup>11</sup> Guests from outside of the CA also saw jokes made at their expense, with the Vice-Governor of the Bank of Japan referred to as the man ‘who is going to take away six-millions of our hard earned money. (laughter.)’<sup>12</sup>

Laughter and enjoyment on these occasions, was, of course, stimulated by the quality of the food and drinks (namely alcohol) available. Food, at the Association’s dinner of 1905, consisted of a seven course meal, with numerous options available for each. Beverages began with a dry sherry, followed by Liebfraumilch, Charles Heidseck 1893, Moët and Chandon 1898, Liqueurs, Château Talbot 1890, and finally, Martinez’s port. It was this alcoholic consumption, perhaps, which saw “for he’s a jolly good fellow’ being cordially given with the accompanying three cheers and a vigorous tiger” to the final speaker of the evening.<sup>13</sup>

It is worthwhile to briefly note here that there was little about these dinners, in terms of décor or menu choices, to demonstrate the links of the Association to China in the way that a contemporary Burns dinner, for example, would have displayed Scottish symbols, or served a Scottish menu. With the British inhabitants in East Asia always conscious of the need for separation from the Chinese population few would have engaged with Chinese culture, or eaten Chinese food.<sup>14</sup> As such, the CA gatherings saw the rooms used decorated in a typical British style, and saw western

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<sup>10</sup> Byron Brenan told this story in 1901 and again in 1922. For the full recollection, see chapter 4 of this thesis.

<sup>11</sup> Annual report for 1908-09, appendix p.153, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>12</sup> Annual report for 1904-05, appendix p.101, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04. The speaker was likely referring to the ongoing ‘House Tax’ dispute, in which Japan sought to impose taxes on foreign owned buildings placed upon land which, under unequal treaties, had been ceded in perpetuity to Western nations. The disagreement centred upon whether it was only the land which had been ceded, and could therefore not be taxed, and whether this tax exempt status applied also to buildings upon it. See Douglas Howland, ‘The Japan House Tax Case, 1899-1905: Leases in Perpetuity and the Myth of International Equality’, *Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht*, 75 (2015), pp.413-434.

<sup>13</sup> The dinner menu is to be found in Invitations, Programmes, menus and guest lists for meetings, dinners and other functions, PP MS 14/011/303, Papers of Sir Charles Stewart Addis, SOAS Library, University of London. The response given to the final speaker is recorded in the annual report of the Association for 1905, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.

<sup>14</sup> Bickers, ‘Shanghaianders and Others’, p.280.

food served. This was true even when Chinese dignitaries were dined, as the journalist writing anonymously as ‘the party on the spot’ for *Fun* noted rather crassly after attending an 1896 dinner given to Li Hongzhang

Though dining with Li Hung Chang  
(And several swells beside)  
Is (using most high-class slang)  
A “function” to fill with pride.  
My Spirits began to droop,  
And set me to heaving sighs,  
When they offered no bird’s nest soup,  
And proffered no puppy-dog pies.<sup>15</sup>

Instead, another aspect of their shared experience of China was invoked by speakers to remind them of the ties they had forged with one another. Frequent references were made to the famous hospitality of the East, which was seen as ‘a legacy... from the old princely houses...and we who have lived for many years so very far from our own country have always done what we could to keep the lamp of good fellowship and welcome to our visitors burning brightly.’<sup>16</sup> On the one night a year when they gathered as a whole, the CA gained the opportunity to strengthen ties between its members, for business reasons or otherwise, by reminding members of these shared experiences and values, emphasising that although they were no longer a small British presence in a foreign land, shared hospitality and goodwill were still vital for the continuing China trade.

Following the conclusion of the formal part of the evening, members proceeded to an adjoining room for a more informal social gathering. At the London dinners this conversation seems to have focussed strongly upon reminiscence of lives and time in China, and will be discussed briefly below in order to discuss the role it could play in alleviating the pressures of a ‘difficult return’ to Britain for these men. Also discussed below is how this period of the evening could also prove valuable in allowing the creation of networks for business or political reasons, though with conversations naturally not recorded, this cannot be proved conclusively. Beyond this, a record of the Yokohama dinner of 1901 offers some flavour of the entertainment the

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<sup>15</sup> “Fun Week by Week.” *Fun* (London, England), 18 August 1896.

<sup>16</sup> Annual report for 1908, p.153, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

Association members could create for themselves.<sup>17</sup> On this occasion, members Mr. Brady and Dr. Wheeler sung ‘the grass widower’ and ‘the farmer’s boy’, before the evening closed with the Chairman singing ‘that well known nautical ditty’, ‘With a Yo, Heave oh’, although the lack of a Piano at the venue was much lamented.<sup>18</sup>

### *Receptions*

The idea of a reception was first brought to the attention of the committee in 1925 and was proposed to be held on an evening, sometime during the spring. The motivation was the ‘desire of quite a number of members’ for a function ‘to which ladies might be invited’, with members perhaps feeling the Association’s current policy of excluding women from the annual dinner was stunting its potential for social gatherings.<sup>19</sup> With only one committee member opposing such a function a sub-committee was created to examine its viability. By the following year the Association’s reception had been inaugurated, held at the Hotel Victoria and was ‘largely attended.’<sup>20</sup> From this point onwards, the reception was hosted consistently, except when disrupted by wider events, most notably the Second World War, following which it became the CA’s primary social function.<sup>21</sup>

In contrast to the Association’s annual and official dinners these receptions were distinctly informal. A sit-down supper was considered, but rejected in favour of

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<sup>17</sup> Turning again to the 1929 annual dinner, HRH Prince George noted that he was ‘Glad to feel that I am present on an occasion when friends meet—(applause)—who may have been separated for years, and that this dinner is an occasion when all can indulge in interesting talk and probably in reminiscences, to some of which I should certainly rather listen than to the formal speeches which remain the custom at a reunion. (Laughter and applause).’ See the annual report for 1929-30, appendix, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

<sup>18</sup> Annual report for 1901-02, Appendix p.65, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03.

<sup>19</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 February 1925, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6. Other Associations undertook similar events to allow female participation, for example the (considerably earlier) St. Georges society of Montreal, which in 1848 organised a ‘charity ball’ to which men, women and families could attend. This was done specifically to alleviate the financial difficulties of the Society, however, and there is no evidence to suggest this was the case for the CA. Both, however, were organised specifically so as not to impede in any way on the all male formal dinners of the bodies, showing perhaps how little had changed regarding gender attitudes—at least those related to formal dinners—in the intervening 77 years. See Lietch, ‘The Importance of Being English’, p.115.

<sup>20</sup> Annual report for 1926-27, p.xxi, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08.

<sup>21</sup> The reception is recorded as having been held from 1925 until 1939. Post World War Two the reception was reinstated in 1948, and continued until the end of the period under consideration, 1955, excepting 1951. The annual dinner of the Association was only held once in this post war period, in 1952, and attracted 200 attendees in comparison to the 400 attracted by the reception in the same year. See the annual report for 1952, p.4, available at Annual Reports, 1942-53, CHAS/A/10A, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

a buffet 'less elaborate in character' in 1930.<sup>22</sup> A circular sent to members advertised tickets at 12s.6d each which included buffet refreshments and red or white wine, with dancing to take place between 9pm and midnight.<sup>23</sup> Expenditure reports also attest to a spending of £17.6s.0d on a 'band and toastmaster' by 1936.<sup>24</sup> Following the Second World War, the function was revived and was held at the earlier time of 6pm-8pm. The ticket price of 10s included sherry, soft drinks, wine and 'small chow', with other refreshments available for cash, while dress remained informal.<sup>25</sup>

In terms of popularity, these receptions were a successful undertaking. Reflecting on the first reception held the committee noted that although few members had actually applied for tickets, when their guests—friends and ladies—were added, the total attendance was considered large.<sup>26</sup> With the receptions that followed making no substantial losses for the Association the committee was happy to continue them.<sup>27</sup> Other receptions were either 'largely attended' in 1927, attended by a 'large number of members and their guests' in 1928, saw attendance 'well up to average' in 1934, and attracted 218 guests in 1937.<sup>28</sup> A drop in attendance was noted in 1939, perhaps due to the Sino-Japanese war, and plans were made to alter the function to an afternoon cocktail party in 1940, although in light of the Second World War, both these plans and the reception were eventually abandoned.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 16 April 1930, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>23</sup> H.C. Wilcox, Joint Secretary, to all members of the China Association, 20 May 1930, General Committee Papers, February 1930 – July 1931, CHAS/MCP/36, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>24</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 June 1936, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>25</sup> G.E. Mitchell, Secretary and Vice-chairman, to all members of the China Association, 20 March, 1953, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1953, CHAS/MCP/50C, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>26</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 January 1931, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> For the 1937 reception see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 15 July 1937, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7. All other mentions of the solid attendance of the function are drawn from the annual reports of the Association, see Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08 and Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

<sup>29</sup> See Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 10 April 1940, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937 - December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943 - December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London; and E.M. Gull, secretary, to the General Committee, 29 April 1940, General Committee Circulars, June 1939 - November 1940, CHAS/MCP/43, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.



With the Association's annual dinner only hosted once after the Second World War, the reception took on a much more prominent role, becoming the only social gathering open to the wider CA membership, wives, and friends. Upon its resumption in 1948 applications for tickets immediately outnumbered the police regulations for the venue of an 'absolute limit of 400 people.'<sup>30</sup> Further receptions in 1952, 1953, 1954 and 1955 again saw the attendance reach this maximum limit.<sup>31</sup> In all likelihood this represented the simple growth in numbers of returnees that occurred in this period. There were 6,000 Britons in Shanghai in 1937, 4,500 in 1948, and only 1,850 by 1950. By January 1951 there were 1,311, and by October of the same year only 697.<sup>32</sup> Though they would move all around the world seeking new employment, this cannot have failed to boost numbers of returnees in Britain considerably.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps the growth of this function though, too, represents a slight change in the character of the CA's wider membership, and of the British returnee community. Those settlers forced to return to Britain following their displacement by the Sino-Japanese War, Second World War and subsequent rise of the PRC government would, after all, have forfeited any property or small investments in China on their return and therefore have had no need for the parts of formal dinners which always served some political function.<sup>34</sup> Those who retained active commercial links to China needed a replacement social gathering for these formal dinners in which to pursue politics, however, and this took the form of luncheons.

### *Luncheons*

The final type of social events to be considered were the efforts of the CA to entertain prominent men connected to East Asia by providing a luncheon or small dinner gathering which they, and Association committee members, would attend. Although one luncheon was held in 1925 it was not typical of the later CA events, which only

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<sup>30</sup> G.E. Mitchell, Secretary and Vice-chairman, to all members of the China Association, 25 April 1949, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1949, CHAS/MCP/49, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>31</sup> See the annual reports for these years, available at Annual Reports, 1942-53, CHAS/A/10A and Annual Reports, CHAS/A/11, 1953-57.

<sup>32</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.236-242.

<sup>33</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, Chapter six contains numerous examples of the careers they sought in other imperial settings, with varying success.

<sup>34</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.234-8.

became regular during the Second World War.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, between 1939 and 1947 these were the only ‘entertainments’ of any kind hosted by the CA.<sup>36</sup> Between these dates the Chinese Ambassador was entertained three times by an Association committee, with other luncheons given to Dr Yulin Hsi and a Chinese ‘Goodwill Mission’ in 1943, the Governor of Hongkong in 1945, and again in 1947, and a trade mission to China in 1946.<sup>37</sup> Unable to host these men at large scale gatherings as they had in the past due to the ongoing war hostilities, these luncheons became a valuable political channel for the Association to express its views.

As such, in 1946, a decision was made to split the Association’s entertainment into two distinct types. Aware of the importance of opportunities to meet and network with prominent individuals, and thus far still unable to restore the formal dinners of the Association in post-war Britain, the small luncheons were to be held for political means, with the Association’s receptions providing a social gathering.<sup>38</sup> Between 1948 and 1955, a further 21 events were hosted to entertain prominent British and Chinese officials and some insight into the form the political discussion took at these gatherings is given below. Guests to the 1947 function, hosted at the Savoy Hotel, included the Chinese ambassador alongside representatives of the Foreign Office, Colonial Office, Board of Trade, Treasury and Ministry of Transport.<sup>39</sup>

### **Encouraging sociability and countering the ‘difficult return’**

Before examining in detail the political potential of the CA’s gatherings, however, let us first turn to the important social role they played. Recent scholarship has made much of the concept of a ‘difficult return’ for those coming back to Britain from imperial frontiers. Ideas of a loss of status and importance, combined with a lack of

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<sup>35</sup> The 1925 luncheon, held at the hotel Victoria, was to lunch the British delegates to an upcoming tariff conference. Unlike the small affairs that were later luncheons, some 132 members and guests attended alongside the five delegates, with the major speech given by the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs, Sir Austen Chamberlain. See the annual report for 1925-6, appendix pp.6-14, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08. Sir Austen Chamberlain’s speech is also available in Sir Austen Chamberlain, *Peace in our Time: Addresses on Europe and the Empire* (Glasgow: The University Press, 1928), pp.243-54.

<sup>36</sup> Information drawn from the annual reports of the China Association, 1939 - 1947, available at Annual Reports, 1935-42, CHAS/A/10, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London and Annual Reports, 1942-53, CHAS/A/10A.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Circular to the General Committee, 27 November 1946, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1946, CHAS/MCP/46.

<sup>39</sup> G.E. Mitchell to members of the General Committee, 24 January 1947, China Association Bulletins and Circulars, JSS/11/5/2/1, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive.

interest from those back in Britain for tales of imperial frontiers, often left returnees finding it difficult to readjust to life at home. Friendships were most easily found amongst those who had shared similar overseas experiences.<sup>40</sup> Against this background, the CA's social functions had the potential to form a major part of the social calendar for what was, in Britain, a proportionally small number of returnees from Asia.<sup>41</sup> And indeed, as the points below attest, we find that this was the case. Many members attended for purely social, rather than political reasons—further evidence that the CA may itself be best regarded as containing two types of members: the active men with current links to China who formed the committees, and those who no longer held direct links to China, and joined simply for social reasons.

That the social components of these dinners should in no way be second to their potential political importance is shown by the early efforts undertaken by the Association to ensure that as many members as possible could attend. Originally, the annual dinners were held in February or March.<sup>42</sup> However, this proved problematic for members who 'were in the habit of going abroad for the winter', and one member even tendered his resignation as a result, the dinner having been the only reason he subscribed to the CA in the first place.<sup>43</sup> Such problems may seem somewhat insincere, but they held a serious grounding. Referring to the change the *North China Herald* praised the move, with 'the physical delicacy—which, however, they effectually conceal from the ordinary observer—of all old China hands making it dangerous for them to be in London in the winter.' To accommodate such concerns the Association decided to alter the date of the annual dinner to the Autumn in 1896—though not without first holding a dinner in the winter of 1895, too, such was the 'addiction to conviviality' of the old China hands which the reporter perceptively noted 'the hypothetical breakdown of their constitutions may possibly be partly due'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Buettner, "We Don't Grow Coffee and Bananas in Clapham Junction You Know", pp. 302-328.

<sup>41</sup> Determining how many returnees came back to Britain from China is a difficult task, beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the total number of British residents in China (excluding Hongkong) was 10,140 by 1910, peaking at 15,247 in 1925, see Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.13. The 1931 census for Hongkong records some 6,636 'Europeans' who were British subjects, see Frank Welsh, *A History of Hongkong* (London: Harper Collins, Revised Edition, 1997), p.437. Overall, the total British population on the China Coast and Hongkong seems to have little exceeded 20,000 at any one time in the period under consideration.

<sup>42</sup> For example, see The Dinner, 5 March 1890, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>43</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 13 December 1894, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>44</sup> "The China Dinner" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 20 December 1895, pp.10-11.

Regardless of the reasons behind it, physical infirmity caused by time spent in East Asia could, too, add to a ‘difficult return.’

While we have seen from our investigation into the original membership that some members of the CA returned to Britain with considerable wealth, this was not true for the wider majority of membership as it expanded beyond the original key founding members. Great importance was therefore placed by the CA committees in ensuring that those men only interested in the Association for social reasons were not forced out of the body for financial reasons. By 1900, the annual dinner of the Association was losing around £60 per year, due to both the number of official guests invited and other rising costs. A suggestion to increase ticket prices for the average member was, however, quickly rejected. It was agreed that many of the CA members ‘were not wealthy’ and that they made no use of the commercial and political side of the Association, with their attendance to the dinner the only benefit they gained from their yearly subscription.<sup>45</sup>

Similarly, a motion by the committee to hold no annual dinner in 1907—having held an official dinner in May of that year—was met with great opposition from R.S. Gundry. Objecting to the proposal he noted that

The ordinary member didn’t care about official dinners and didn’t come to them. He [the ordinary member] looked on them as official manoeuvres that didn’t concern him. The proof was that only 66 members came to the dinner we gave the Chinese Commissioner, last year, and only 71 to the [Sir Frederick] Lugard dinner; whereas 155 members attended the annual dinner in the autumn. The ordinary member who lived all over the country reserved himself for the annual Dinners, which he would expect this year as usual in November.<sup>46</sup>

On reflection, the committee agreed with Gundry’s view, and the dinner was reinstated. Furthermore, in response to the ‘growing discontent prevalent among a considerable section of members’ the length of speeches, and number of toasts, were to be limited at the reinstated function. After all, as the Chairman noted, ‘the average member... came to the dinner to meet old friends and not to listen to the eloquence of the speakers.’<sup>47</sup> As 1905 had already seen the toast list, and related speeches to the

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<sup>45</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 November 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>46</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 30 July 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

imperial forces and the crown, omitted ‘in order to allow more time for social intercourse after the dinner’, a format which continued into 1906, when the *London and China Telegraph* reported ‘there was the usual toast list, which was not too long to permit of that social reunion afterwards which has always been a feature of the China Dinner’, allowing a ‘prolonged’ informal gathering afterwards, a further shortening of the official section of the dinner only emphasises the importance of this aim.<sup>48</sup> Inclusivity was certainly one key aim when organizing the CA’s social functions. Again, we may speculate that this was to ensure retention of a large membership, an attribute which can contribute substantially to the power of a political pressure group—even if this wider membership cared little for politics itself.

Ultimately, for many members, meeting old friends was the most important aspect of their membership to the CA, and their attendance at social functions. This would be less possible during the formal dinner, where members could only converse with those sat in their close proximity. However, as Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show, patterns do emerge from the seating plan of an 1890 dinner that suggest seating was arranged for social, as well as political, purposes. Though perhaps speculative, they show members seated in groups linked to both their main location of residence during their sojourn in East Asia, and also to the time period they spent there. The larger side tables seem to have been populated by Shanghai and Hongkong residents who arrived in East Asia at similar times, with each of the smaller side tables accounting to a large extent for the Association’s membership with links to Foochow and Yokohama. The centre table was populated overwhelmingly by those with Shanghai links, whereas those with Hongkong links are clustered at the head of the table. Guests were also seated at the head of the centre table, surrounded by key Association members, this being also indicative of the fact that the most influential Association members—and the companies they represented—were often domiciled in Hongkong.<sup>49</sup>

Greater potential for sociability existed, however, following the termination of formal proceedings. Attendees would, at this point, retire to an adjoining room to renew old acquaintances. The *North China Herald’s* London sources reported in 1895

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<sup>48</sup> Reprinted in the annual report for 1906-07, appendix pp.54, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05. For 1905, see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 September 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

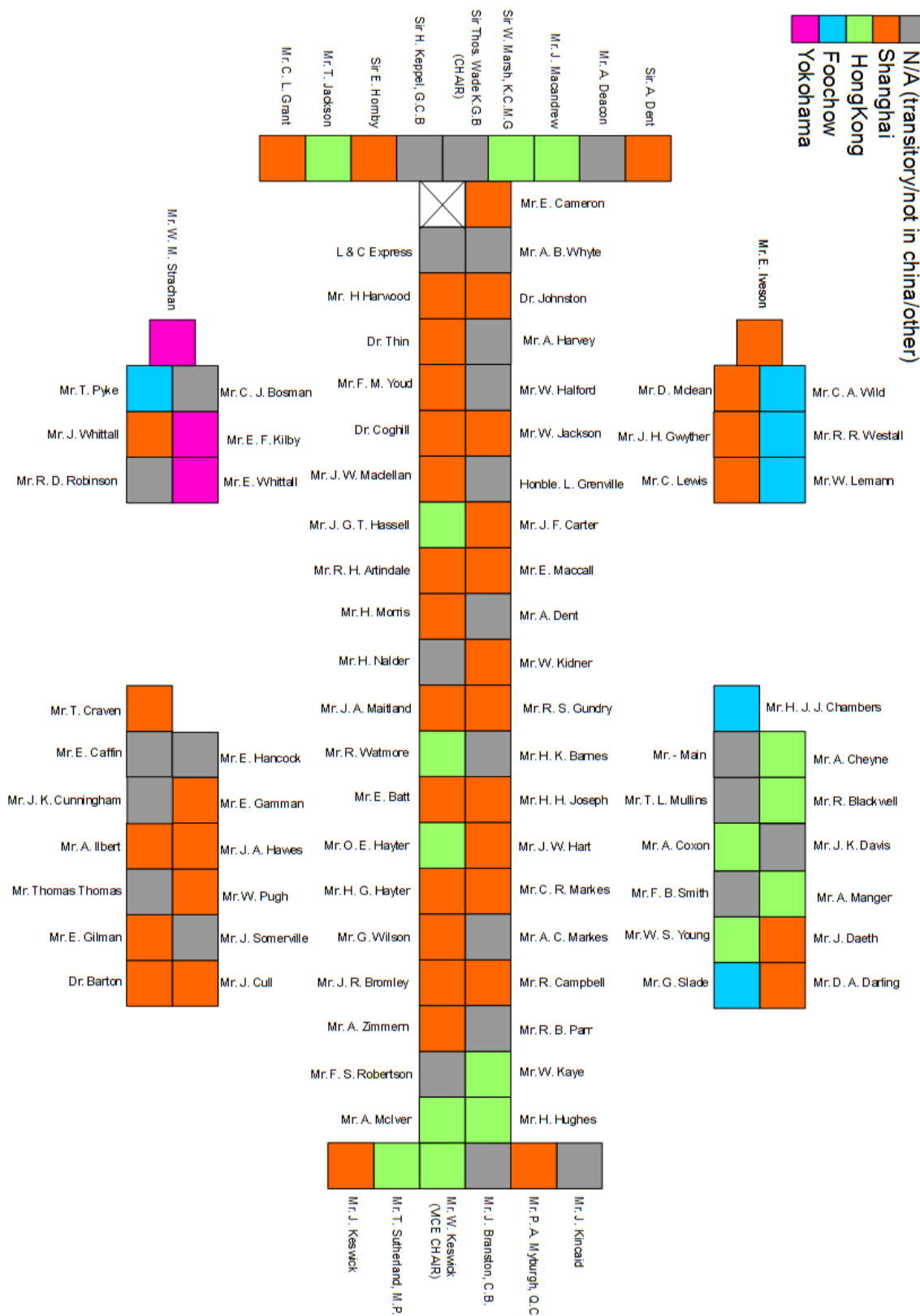
<sup>49</sup> See appendix C for a discussion of some of these key firms. Some of these men and their employment history are also recorded in appendix A.

**Figure 3.1: Main location of residence in East Asia (1889 dinner attendees)**

source: China Directories etc. available online at

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/history/customs/ancestors/directories.html> (last accessed 29

October 2018)





that ‘The dinner was an excellent one, but the great interest of the evening was meeting such a number of old friends, many personally known to one, many by reputation only.’ This only truly occurred when, following the speeches

All adjourned for the indispensable whisky and soda, and the mutual exchange of almost forgotten recollections. It was amusing—and very interesting—to meet the men one had not seen for ten, fifteen, twenty, or even more years, and see how gradually recognition awoke, and reminiscences were plunged into, to the mutual delight of recogniser and recognised. The drawback was that these interviews were necessarily so brief; one wanted to talk for an hour with every old friend found again instead of three or four minutes which was all that was possible. Still, it was a delightful evening and no China hand who is at home at the time should miss the annual China Dinner.<sup>50</sup>

Several striking points are raised by this account. First, the sheer reported delight of men reintroduced to social contacts which had lapsed following their return. Secondly, that the dinner itself was not simply a chance to renew contacts, but even to forge them, making personal relations between men previously known ‘by reputation only’, a great success for the CA, especially if these men were still active in business. Finally, the importance of the occasion is shown by the reporter’s chosen nomenclature. That the article itself was headlined ‘The China Dinner’, makes it clear that there was no comparable function extant in Britain at the time. It was a truly unique occasion, with unique potential. Former consul Byron Brenan stated his belief in 1904 that ‘the Association has justified its existence by giving an opportunity to all those who have been in the Far East of meeting once a year... I am sure we all look forward to these evening, and as we cast our eyes up and down these tables we look for old familiar faces.’<sup>51</sup>

It is apt here to make note of another potentially valuable—though ultimately limited—avenue for socialising that existed in London, originating with the creation of the China Society in 1907.<sup>52</sup> The Society, by 1913, was hosting monthly lectures on Chinese topics.<sup>53</sup> However, it seems to have held little attraction for most returnees, and particularly mercantile men, and where membership crossover did exist with the

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<sup>50</sup> “The China Dinner” *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 11 April 1895, pp.10-11.

<sup>51</sup> See the annual report for 1904-05, appendix pp.110-11, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.

<sup>52</sup> J.C.F., ‘The China Society’, *Journal of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Shanghai, China, Vol. XXXVIII, 1907), p.226.

<sup>53</sup> “The China Society” *The Straits Times* (Singapore), 13 February 1913.



CA this was in the form of ex-government employees, often scholars of China.<sup>54</sup> Monthly lectures, in reality, would offer little social value to those who resided some distance outside of London and for whom travelling was a considerable effort. It was noted, for example, that CA members travelled ‘not only from all parts of England, but some even from Ireland and the North of Scotland’ to attend the CA’s social functions.<sup>55</sup> While a useful setting for some returnees to socialise in, the China Society was not so for the majority of those involved in the CA. Similarly, the Thatched House Club at which the CA was founded may well have provided an informal meeting space, but predominantly for those who still retained employment in the city of London. As we have already seen, this was not the case for the majority of the members of the CA, and it should be further noted those who did were perhaps less likely to be struggling with a ‘difficult return’ as they continued to work—in lucrative posts—for companies which employed substantial numbers of men who held shared experiences of life in China.

Indeed, the importance of the CA dinner as a unique event in the social calendar had certainly not diminished by the time of the First World War. With the dinner cancelled due to hostilities one member wrote to implore the committee to hold a ‘private and informal gathering under the Association’s auspices at which members could meet their friends’, a request ultimately denied so as not to contradict the committee’s decision to cancel the annual dinner.<sup>56</sup> It was only in the mid-1930s that another China linked dinner seems to have appeared on the London calendar, hosted under the auspices of the China Society. This was a development of the society from its earlier focus on being an educational body and the dinner seems to have been a small affair. Hosted in 1935 and 1937, by 1939 the society were ‘anxious’ that the dinner should be a success and appealed to the CA for help, hoping that ten members

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<sup>54</sup> J.C.F., ‘The China Society’, p.226.

<sup>55</sup> See The China Association: Dinner to Sir Claude Macdonald, 1899, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>56</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 5 January 1915, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

of the CA committee might bolster the attendance for that year, outlining the separation in membership between the two groups previously noted.<sup>57</sup>

Later in the period under consideration, as previously mentioned, receptions became the major social gatherings of the CA. It is clear from a lengthy report placed in *The North China Herald* that these occasions were similarly essential social gatherings for Far Eastern returnees.<sup>58</sup> The article, entitled ‘China Association Soiree: Enthusiastic Annual Gathering Held in London’ nonetheless began by lamenting that the evening started slowly, and somewhat awkwardly. Largely, the writer attributed this to the particular circumstances of social life in East Asia, noting that

In the Far East there are very few entertainments that do not take place in clubs we belong to or know intimately, or in the pre-arrangement of which we or some of our friends have not taken a direct share. Here we were on strange ground, we had just paid for our tickets and the hotel folk were responsible that we got our money’s worth... Like Bostock’s lions, turned out of their travelling cage into the leafy jungle of Whipsnade, we had to sniff every corner of our domain before settling down to play.<sup>59</sup>

The analogy of Bostock’s lions, once deciphered, is powerful and apposite, though perhaps unintentionally so. The lions—removed from their natural habitat—had been part of a famous travelling menagerie—Bostock and Wombwell’s—until 1932, the same year this article appeared in the *North China Herald*. In that year, the menagerie’s collection was sold to London Zoo, and formed part of its new collection, housed in Whipsnade. Though it is unclear whether it was used intentionally to do so, the analogy illustrates the plight of many returnees, one of dislocation and travel before an eventual return to what resembled home—the ‘leafy jungle’ of Whipsnade zoo, for the zoo was to showcase ‘animals in natural conditions’—only to find themselves uncomfortable.<sup>60</sup> Certainly, the writer seems to have intentionally made readers aware that when removed from the comfortable, smaller communities of East Asia, and the clubs, societies and venues to which they had become accustomed, and

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<sup>57</sup> For a brief report of the China Society dinners of 1935 and 1937 see “The China Society Dinner.” *Times* (London, England), 11 July. 1935, p.11 and “Britain and China” *Times* (London, England), 12 January 1937, p.14. For the request made of the CA see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 20 April 1939, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937 - December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943 - December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8.

<sup>58</sup> “China Association Soiree: Enthusiastic Annual Gathering Held in London” *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 20 July 1932, p.33.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> “Sale of Bostock’s Menagerie.” *Times* (London, England), 22 August 1931, p.8. “Bostock’s Show.” *Times* (London, England), 19 January. 1932, p.9. “New Zoological Park at Whipsnade.” *Times* (London, England), 4 December 1930, p.19.

even familiar with the inner workings of—their own small cage in the travelling menagerie—they found it a struggle to adjust to the sprawling expanse of London and dining in strange hotels.

Yet as the same article attests, there were even more factors at play ensuring the return to Britain was difficult for those from East Asia. Shanghai had quickly developed a reputation as something of an unsavoury city with a barely hidden darker side of crime and immoral nightlife. Gail Hershatter has noted that ‘stories of women kidnapped by traffickers and sold as prostitutes abounded in early-twentieth-century Shanghai’, with ‘both foreigners and Chinese’ taking up the topic in their literature.<sup>61</sup> Boxing matches held on the rooftop of ‘The Carlton’ were particularly vicious, and so bloody as to draw the wrath of the Shanghai Municipal Council.<sup>62</sup> Violence which was not of the sporting kind was well reported too, on the ‘1920-30s bar streets such as the Trenches and Blood Alley, which were notorious for their international cast of bar hostesses, their rowdy male customers, and their violent brawls’ alongside a Chinese populace who had contracted ‘dance madness’ in the city, as part of a cabaret scene intrinsically linked to violent gangs.<sup>63</sup> Whether many of these accusations were true or not, often stemming from the pen of visiting authors and journalists who lambasted the city, the writer of the article was nonetheless keenly aware of the reputation, and felt he was being unfairly judged throughout the occasion by invited guests who had never been to East Asia. He was, he said

Sorry for the dancing partners whom some of the young girls had brought along. But I daresay their rather constrained appearance was that they were secretly sorry for us. There are still people in England who look at you rather doubtfully on hearing that you have lived in China. I don’t know what the above mentioned dancing partners thought we had done, or might do at any moment, but they were plainly nervous.<sup>64</sup>

Whether this slight was true, or simply the imagination of the writer, it is clear that adjusting to social life in Britain was proving difficult, even in company comprised overwhelmingly of returnees from China.

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<sup>61</sup> Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth Century Shanghai* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1997), pp.181-203.

<sup>62</sup> Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, p.73.

<sup>63</sup> James Farrer and Andrew David Field, *Shanghai Nightscapes: A Nocturnal Biography of a Global City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), p.16-25 and p.215. Chapter two of the same work focuses on Shanghai in the ‘Golden Age of the Jazz Cabaret’, contemporary to the writer of the article. For a general overview see also Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, pp.73-77.

<sup>64</sup> Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, pp.76-7; “China Association Soiree: Enthusiastic Annual Gathering Held in London” *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 20 July 1932, p.33.

In the end, it was only the company of these fellow returnees which cheered the writer. While he may have struggled to cope with the strange world of London, and been bitter at the suspicions of some guests, he rejoiced in insisting that

The bond of fellowship forged by life in the Far East is the most familiar of truisms, and people who have spent the best years of their life in loathing each other in Shanghai, when they meet again in the lonely crowds of London foam like a jug of shandygaff on a hot day. There were those who left China forty years ago and others who first went there barely forty months ago, but we all met on common ground.<sup>65</sup>

It was, the writer was left to lament, unfortunate that ‘we China folk [will], to some extent always [be] aliens in our own country to the end of our days.’ It was perhaps only in half-jest that he wondered if the CA might not organise classes at which members might learn how to pronounce ‘extraterritoriality’ or ‘some really snappy slogans, such as “up with silver, down with diplomacy”’ to foster a kind of ‘China class-consciousness’ with which they could defend against the accusations of the aforementioned guests who believed their life in China had been full of misdeeds.<sup>66</sup> Regardless of whether these slights were real, such returnees as the writer certainly felt them.

The difficult return from China, then, was in some ways reminiscent of that described by other authors. Readjusting to the metropole, and life in Britain in general, proved difficult. A loss of social status was common with other groups of returnees, often linked to their movement from small enclave communities to the larger cities of Britain, and into the reporter’s ‘lonely crowds of London.’ Similarly, many of these returnees—though the elite of the British presence in China—were not wealthy by British standards on their return (one can only imagine the difficulty faced by men who returned too poor to even join the CA). But for those from China it was also unique. It was defined by the reputation they had acquired by their relationship to the city of Shanghai, and the supposedly immoral British lifestyle in China. Their small numbers also meant that opportunities for socialising were rare. They were thankful, therefore, for the CA reception, and Dinners before it, which had at least offered one night a year where they could meet with their kind, albeit in sometimes uncomfortable locations, and enjoy conversation and reminiscence as part of a large group with whom they held common ground. As C.S. Addis of the HSBC had remarked, The CA was

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

‘never more agreeably occupied... than in promoting... the good fellowship of its members; in linking the present with the past, the East with the West; in awakening afresh the memories of old but undying friendships; and in dispensing to its guests the traditional hospitality of the East.’<sup>67</sup>

## **Politics at dinner**

### *Official guests - building links with government as an ‘insider’ interest group*

Whilst the committee ensured the social functions of the CA did not become overwhelmingly political affairs they always served at least some political purpose. And although the prominence of politics at these functions varied, depending on the format of the function and date, several attempts by the CA to exploit these gatherings for political ends are clear. The most overt political element of the CA dinners was the invitation of ‘official guests’ who were entertained at no cost to themselves. These guests were selected by the General Committee and were to consist of ‘any men of distinction who are connected with or interested in China.’<sup>68</sup> Although a complete list of these guests cannot be reproduced due to constraints of space several who attended either the CA’s annual dinners, or dinners given to prominent individuals, are worthy of note as their positions help to identify the government departments and other groups the CA thought worthy of attempting to build relationships with.

First, the Foreign Office was regarded by the CA as the key government department with which to establish contacts. To this end, Foreign Office representatives were invited as official guests to every dinner the CA held. Specific names were not always recorded or mentioned—the Association were respectful of the wishes of some Foreign Offices employees and other guests not to name them, as reports of dinners were reproduced in the press. Despite this—and the caveat this introduces that the attendees discussed below are by no means a comprehensive selection—some are recognisable, and a brief investigation into their careers highlights not only the importance and influence of these men that the CA was bringing into personal contact with its membership, but also the sustained period over which this was undertaken.

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<sup>67</sup> Annual report for 1905, appendix p.140, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.

<sup>68</sup> The China Association (established 1889) Objects, rules and regulations, Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

Of the earliest Foreign Office attendees to CA functions, three are notable. First, we find Francis L. Bertie, later to become Viscount Bertie of Thame. Bertie is identified by other works as the CA's primary early contact within the Foreign Office, and attended a dinner of 1896, when the CA hosted Chinese dignitary Li Hongzhang. Bertie had been promoted to Chief Clerk in charge of the Eastern Department at the Foreign Office in 1889, the year of the CA's foundation, before becoming an under-secretary of state in 1893 in which role he superintended the American and Asiatic department. By the turn of the century he was purely concerned with the Far Eastern, or China, department.<sup>69</sup> T.G. Otte, in his work on China, has noted Bertie wielded 'considerable influence within the Foreign Office' and found his superior Lord Salisbury 'receptive to his ideas.'<sup>70</sup> Bertie's main contemporary with whom he helped to shape policy related to East Asia in the Foreign Office—Thomas Sanderson—was also a guest of the CA, and is discussed later. Finally, attending the same 1896 dinner as Bertie we find George Nathaniel Curzon. Later to become Viceroy of India, Curzon was, as of 1896, under-secretary of state at the Foreign Office, an MP, and, with his superior Salisbury a member of the House of Lords, the government's 'chief foreign policy spokesman in the commons.'<sup>71</sup> Curzon, speaking candidly, praised the CA as 'a happy and potent link between the Far East and West' and an Association which had 'earned the confidence of the governments of both Great Britain and of China.' He further insisted that 'They regarded (in the Foreign Office) the views of that Association [the CA] with respect, and they not infrequently invited it to aid them.'<sup>72</sup>

As time progressed and the staff of relevant Foreign Office departments changed, the CA ensured that invitations saw contemporaries invited to social occasions to help maintain this relationship. At a 1906 dinner given to Duke T'sai Tze both Sir Eric Barrington and Lord Fitzmaurice represented the Foreign Office. Barrington was, by this time, a veteran of 38 years in the Foreign Office and had

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<sup>69</sup> See Keith Hamilton, *Bertie of Thame: Edwardian ambassador: Royal Historical Society Studies in History*, 60 (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1990); Keith Hamilton, 'Bertie, Francis Leveson, first Viscount Bertie of Thame (1844–1919)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30734>, last accessed 17 October 2017).

<sup>70</sup> T.G., Otte, *The China Question: Great Power Rivalry and British Isolation, 1894-1905* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.22-23.

<sup>71</sup> David Gilmour, 'Curzon, George Nathaniel, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (1859–1925)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32680>, last accessed 17 October 2017).

<sup>72</sup> Li Hung Chang: Banquet by the China Association, 7 August 1896, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

previously been private secretary to Foreign Secretaries Lord Iddesleigh, Lord Salisbury, and Lord Lansdowne, but had in 1905 risen to the position of under-secretary of state for Foreign Affairs.<sup>73</sup> Lord Fitzmaurice was, at the time, the parliamentary under-secretary of state for Foreign Affairs and attended the dinner in this capacity.<sup>74</sup> A dinner in 1911 saw Max Muller attend when serving in the department as something of a career interregnum, between a role as counsellor at the legation in Peking and a post in the diplomatic service in Budapest.<sup>75</sup> Sir John Tilley attended a CA dinner of 1920, following his promotion to under-secretary in 1919.<sup>76</sup> Also attending a 1920 function, as well as those in 1926 and 1928 was Sir Victor Wellesley. Wellesley was a guest of considerable influence, and, serving as head of the Far Eastern department of the Foreign Office had dealt with such events as the end of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the Washington treaty of 1922, the British reaction to revolution in China, the dispatch of the Shanghai Defence Force and the Manchurian crisis.<sup>77</sup> Finally, Sir John Pratt, a 25 year veteran of the consular service in China who had returned to Britain in 1925 to take up a post as adviser to the Foreign Office on Far Eastern Affairs, attended a CA dinner in this capacity in 1933.<sup>78</sup> Pratt, certainly, was a potential ally for the CA as it looked to support Foreign Office policy and limit its support of settlers in China in this period, believing the settler presence to be ‘low-white danger’ to the new British stance after 1925.<sup>79</sup>

This brief survey offers us a view of consistent effort, over a considerable period, to bring these men into contact with the CA’s membership. All of these men were active, and many held considerable importance in the Foreign Office when attending dinners where they were made aware of the CA’s views and aims.

Alongside the Foreign Office, invitations were also extended to Colonial Office officials for all CA dinners, primarily due to the importance of Hongkong to

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<sup>73</sup>Sir Eric Barrington.” *Times* (London, England), 26 February, 1918, p.8. Otte, *The China Question*, p.192.

<sup>74</sup> T. G. Otte, ‘Fitzmaurice, Edmond George Petty- , Baron Fitzmaurice (1846–1935)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35499>, last accessed 17 October 2017).

<sup>75</sup> "Obituary." *Times* (London, England) 12 May 1945, p.6.

<sup>76</sup> "Sir John Tilley." *Times* (London, England) 7 April 1952, p.8.

<sup>77</sup> Erik Goldstein, ‘Wellesley, Sir Victor Alexander Augustus Henry (1876–1954)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36828>, last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>78</sup>See Pratt’s description in the catalogue to his papers, available online at <https://www.soas.ac.uk/library/archives/collections/a-z/p/> (last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>79</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.225.

the CA. Those who accepted included Sir Montagu Ommaney, who attended dinners in 1905 and 1906 whilst serving as Permanent under-secretary of the Colonial Office.<sup>80</sup> Sir John Anderson attended a dinner in 1912 whilst fulfilling the same role.<sup>81</sup> George Fiddes was a repeat CA guest, attending functions in 1907, 1908 and 1920 whilst serving as head of the Far Eastern Department of the Colonial Office and later permanent under-secretary of State.<sup>82</sup> Leopold Amery gave a long speech outlining his views on the state of Hongkong in his role as colonial secretary at a dinner in 1925.<sup>83</sup> Finally, Oliver Lyttelton attended the CA's dinner of 1952 while serving as Secretary of State for the Colonies.<sup>84</sup>

When viewing the guests invited from these departments, one striking feature is the prominence of under-secretaries. This seems to have been a conscious decision by the CA to maximise the potential of its invitations, as these men are relatively high ranking, but more importantly, permanent government officials. Anyone of a higher standing who was linked to the Foreign Office or Colonial Office would be serving a limited term reliant on the length of time their party stayed in office—as we see above, invitations to Parliamentary under-secretaries were much rarer. In this way, the CA moved to build links that were longstanding, and, arguably, of greater influence within government.<sup>85</sup> T.G. Otte has argued that within the Foreign Office, certainly, that 'they [the permanent staff of the Foreign Office] exercised considerable influence' alongside more prominent Foreign Secretaries.<sup>86</sup> Inviting representatives of political parties would also have risked creating the image that the CA was aligned with a particular party, something which can prove damaging to the influence of a political pressure group—although as noted below, when this was required the CA did pursue

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<sup>80</sup> See David Sunderland, 'Ommaney, Sir Montagu Frederick (1842–1925)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/57565>, last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>81</sup> J. M. Gullick, 'Anderson, Sir John (1858–1918)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, May 2007 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/64112>, last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>82</sup> "Sir G. V. Fiddes." *Times* (London, England) 24 December 1936 p.14.

<sup>83</sup> Deborah Lavin, 'Amery, Leopold Charles Maurice Stennett (1873–1955)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30401>, last accessed 17 October 2017).

<sup>84</sup> See Philip Murphy, 'Lyttelton, Oliver, first Viscount Chandos (1893–1972)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31385>, last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>85</sup> Coxall, *Pressure Groups in British Politics*, pp.63–4 notes that the greatest opportunities for directing policy lie within Whitehall, with permanent, if often junior, members of the civil service.

<sup>86</sup> Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.395.



such aims.<sup>87</sup> Both the type of men the CA sought to invite—and those they chose not to—are reminiscent of the points of contact formed prominently by ‘insider’ interest groups.

The final group which received invites to all CA dinners were representatives of the British armed forces. Though representatives of the Army were not always present, the links the British community in East Asia had with the Royal Navy saw efforts to ensure a high ranking naval officer was in attendance, though they were often retirees. Sir Henry Keppel was the earliest invited, and was greeted by ‘cheers that lasted several minutes’ upon responding to a toast at the CA dinner of 1890. He had served in both Opium Wars, been commander-in-chief in China from 1866 to 1869 and spent many years of service on the China Station.<sup>88</sup> Although he seems not to have attended, 1905 saw Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Moor invited, as Sir Cecil Clementi Smith ‘had reason to know [He] would be appointed to succeed Admiral Curzon-Howe on the China Station.’<sup>89</sup> Later guest Admiral Borrett had forged links with China, too, both early in his career when mentioned in dispatches for his actions during the Boxer Uprising as a torpedo lieutenant, and later as Rear-Admiral on the China Station.<sup>90</sup> A 1911 dinner saw two admirals—Sir Edward Seymour and Sir Wilmot Fawkes—attend. Of the two Seymour was best known, commanding a multi-national force which failed to relieve the legation at Peking during the Boxer Uprising some months before the eventual relief provided by the larger eight nation alliance.<sup>91</sup> Fawkes had served on the China Station during the Sino-Japanese war of 1895, when it was suggested he had warned the Chinese of impending Japanese attack, despite Britain’s official neutrality.<sup>92</sup> Though many of the representatives of the armed forces present had retired, their invitation nonetheless outlines the strong links the British community in China felt to them. Although the days of gunboat diplomacy had reached their zenith before the time of the CA the British presence in China remained precarious, and the

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<sup>87</sup> Watts, *Pressure Groups*, p.58.

<sup>88</sup> L. G. C. Laughton, ‘Keppel, Sir Henry (1809–1904)’, rev. Andrew Lambert, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34297>, last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>89</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 September 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

<sup>90</sup> “Admiral G. H. Borrett.” *Times* (London, England) 11 June 1952, p.8.

<sup>91</sup> H. W. Richmond, ‘Seymour, Sir Edward Hobart (1840–1929)’, rev. Andrew Lambert, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36032>, last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>92</sup> “Admiral Sir Wilmot Fawkes.” *Times* (London, England) 31 May 1926 p.19.

gunboats continued to be deployed, though less effectively, throughout the period of this study.<sup>93</sup> At least feeling they held strong links to the military may well have been a useful comfort.

Alongside the Foreign Office, Colonial Office and armed forces representatives of other government departments were invited when they were on leave from East Asia or when wider circumstances made the invitations opportune. A dinner in 1907 to Frederick Lugard and the annual dinner in 1910 saw Claude MacDonald, Consul General for the Empire of Japan, and John Jordan, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China, attend respectively whilst on leave from Asia. The annual dinner of 1928 also saw the Secretary of State for War attend, allowing the CA to express gratitude for the recent dispatch of the Shanghai Defence Force. Other official guests included representatives of the Treasury, the Overseas Trade Department, Board of Trade and the India Office as well as the Cabinet Minister for War, the Master of Rolls and Admiral Von Truppel, a representative of the German CA.<sup>94</sup> On occasion, too, MPs would be invited if they held an interest in China, though, as will be explored later, the CA cared little for representation in the Houses of Parliament. Finally of note are those who attended not as CA guests, but as guests of individual members. The 1904 dinner, for example, saw both the Consul-General of the United States and the Vice-Governor of the Bank of Japan attend in this capacity.<sup>95</sup>

Why then, did the CA invite these men to their dinners, despite, as already noted, this contributing to the loss of around £60 per dinner by 1900? Wider scholarship discussed previously in this work has shown that occasions such as formal dinners have been recognised for their value as a space between the formal work environment and the informal social environment, allowing informal discussion to take place over business deals, or political discussion to take place. It is important to note that on most occasions to what extent their invitation to these events built links cannot often be accurately determined. Informal conversation and discussion certainly

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<sup>93</sup> For an overview of the uses, successes and failures of British gunboat diplomacy in China see J.Y. Wong, 'The Limits of Naval Power: British Gunboat Diplomacy in China from the Nemesis to the Amethyst, 1839-1949', *War and Society*, 18, 2 (2000), pp.93-120.

<sup>94</sup> Representatives of the Treasury attended the 1908 annual dinner. The overseas trade department was present in 1930, the Board of Trade in 1938, and the India Office in 1907. The Cabinet Minister for War attended in 1924, the master of rolls in 1924, and Admiral Von Truppel in 1912. Reports of all of these dinners have reports reprinted in the Annual Reports of the China Association for the respective years.

<sup>95</sup> Annual report for 1904-05, appendix pp.96-102, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.

existed at these gatherings, but to what extent it proved useful remains hidden by the unrecorded nature of this part of the evening.

However, some examples offer hints of where these occasions allowed members of the CA to create personal relations, for business or political purposes, with these guests. When the departing minister to China Sir Claude Macdonald was hosted in 1896, for example, it was noted how all present had been grateful of the chance to meet him.<sup>96</sup> He was then, as previously mentioned, dined by the CA Shanghai branch upon his arrival in China, and, testament to the value of these occasions, recommended in 1898 to prime minister Lord Salisbury that the CA might be 'invited to take up the work' of surveying the upper Yangtze to ascertain if it was navigable by steamship, backed by government funding.<sup>97</sup>

Alongside this, the dinners allowed the CA to place their views on the current state of China and related political questions in front of these men, and do so in a more public, though not completely open, sphere. This, most commonly, occurred in the speech given each year by a prominent member which focused upon the condition of China as a whole, and of British trade with the nation. But it could, too, be tailored more specifically as it was in 1908, when Mr Gershom Stewart appealed directly to guests from the Treasury and Board of Trade to oppose an increased income tax on money earned in foreign countries that had been suggested as part of a recent budget discussion.<sup>98</sup> With few examples existing of the attendance of guests from the Treasury, it seems unlikely their invitation to a dinner held soon after the new tax was proposed was a coincidence. Similarly, the chance to espouse the views of the CA on the current state of the Foreign Office was one taken on occasion. Using the attendance of HRH Prince George at the dinner and his recent time spent in China as an example, in 1929 chairman Stanley H. Dodwell did not miss the opportunity to suggest that if a Prince could travel to China, and other Royal family members all around the globe, then perhaps the time had come that leading diplomats of the Foreign Office might

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<sup>96</sup> Dinner to Sir Claude MacDonald, 20 February 1896, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>97</sup> Foreign Office, Correspondence respecting the affairs of China: presented to both houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, April 1898 (London: Hanson, 1898), p.245.

<sup>98</sup> Annual Report for 1908, appendix pp.152-6, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05. Ultimately, this tax seems not to have occurred, and taxes on British business abroad remained to be considered as standard income tax, and were stable until general rises in taxation post 1914. See Simon Mollan and Kevin D. Tennent, 'International taxation and corporate strategy: evidence from British overseas business, circa 1900-1965' *Business History*, 57, 7 (2015), pp.1060-61.

finally visit China in person, instead of relying on information provided by others.<sup>99</sup> In this way, the dinners mirror documented examples of St. Andrew's dinners held in India, where through the medium of toasts and responding speeches, views on important political and economic issues were exchanged.<sup>100</sup>

*Protesting over China policy in a public sphere: the combination of Chief Judge and Consul General*

A long running political effort is also revealed by an investigation of a series of dinners held in the 1890s at which the CA focused upon attempting to reverse, and alleviate the problems caused by, the merging of the posts of Chief Judge and Consul General in Shanghai by the British Foreign Office. The British Supreme Court in Shanghai had been established in 1865 and the role of chief judge filled by Sir Edmund Hornby, later a member of the CA who would be involved in the CA's efforts to separate the two posts. The Court's foundation pleased both Qing authorities, as British subjects were no longer tried away from their jurisdiction in Hongkong and also British residents who found the rulings of the Hongkong court 'out of touch with realities on the ground'.<sup>101</sup> The court dealt with disputes between British and Chinese subjects in the Shanghai International Settlement, as well as those between British subjects, with cases involving Chinese and the subjects of other powers left to the Shanghai Mixed Court.<sup>102</sup>

In March 1891, the CA in London received an urgent communication from the wider British community in Shanghai. It was then that it had become apparent that the posts of Chief Judge and British Consul General in the city were to be merged. This was a proposal to which the community objected strongly and, following a meeting of British residents, a telegram was dispatched to a London contact, requesting that the contact encourage the 'Foreign Office [to] stay action' and seek the 'Support [of the]

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<sup>99</sup> Annual report for 1929-30, appendix, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09. Although not noted in the record of the dinner held in the official CA records, Association member Mr. I. Lister Knight became ill and passed away in an adjoining room 'just before' Prince George's Arrival. Perhaps due to the importance of the guest of honour, the assembled company were not informed of the tragedy, nor was the Prince himself. See "Tragedy at a Dinner." *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester, England), 22 November 1929.

<sup>100</sup> Buettner, 'Haggis in the Raj', pp.233-4

<sup>101</sup> Par Kristoffer Cassel, *Grounds of Judgement: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.69.

<sup>102</sup> Cassel, *Grounds of Judgement*, Chapter 3. This did not apply to American Citizens, as America had its own independent court.

China Association and leading Chambers [of] Commerce' in the matter. The CA, following a meeting of the executive committee, in turn dispatched a letter to Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office. Outlining their view that the two posts could feasibly, due to British residents living under conditions of extraterritoriality, become 'antagonistic' towards one another in a dispute, to have them held by a single individual would be impractical. A petition signed by 526 members of the Shanghai community followed, and was forwarded to the Foreign Office alongside the CA's own objections to the amalgamation in May of the same year.<sup>103</sup>

Unfortunately, these protests fell upon deaf ears. A reply to the CA informed them that 'Lord Salisbury thinks that the new arrangement, which was adopted after discussion of several alternative schemes, and was framed with the assistance of very competent advisers, must in any case be given a fair trial.' However, they were prepared to grant the CA the consideration the '[s]hould any real inconvenience be caused to the public service by the amalgamation of the two offices, the question can be reconsidered hereafter.'<sup>104</sup> From this point the CA did not record itself taking any further formal action in its minutes or reports, finding only consolation 'that the action of the Association has been cordially appreciated by the communities affected.'<sup>105</sup> However, although official representations to the Foreign Office had ceased, the CA still retained channels through which it could attempt to influence the situation—notably, through their dinners. It was no coincidence, then, that the 1892 annual dinner saw the CA extend an invitation to Lord James Hannen, brother of Nicholas J. Hannen, current holder of the combined post of Chief Judge and Consul in Shanghai.

It is important to recognise that the holder of the posts, Nicholas J. Hannen, has previously been referred to in this thesis. Indeed, he had been a founding member of the CA and had also chaired the meeting at which the Association's Shanghai branch was created—the year after the CA had failed to halt the merger of these posts, although we cannot conclusively link the two events. Certainly, he chaired this meeting in his official role, rather than in any role linked to the CA. He was not present at the Shanghai branches' second AGM, and it seems, therefore, precluded from

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<sup>103</sup> Correspondence reprinted in the annual report for 1891-2, appendix A pp.9-15 available at Annual Reports, 1889-98, CHAS/A/01, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

membership by his official role. Despite this he did attend the dinner which followed that AGM, and which forms part of the series of dinners under discussion.

It was the year before this, however, that his brother attended the CA's London dinner. The reasoning behind his brother's invitation was clear, and explicitly recorded. It was made by his personal friend Edmund Hornby, who wrote to the CA secretary

Dear Gundry....

I have asked 'Lord Hannen' to come as my guest as he takes an interest in Chinese matters seeing his youngest Brother is now Ch. Jus. & Con. General—which joining of functions, by the way, he wholly disapproves, as I do.<sup>106</sup>

Lord Hannen was certainly qualified to hold an opinion on the matter beyond a family interest. He had spent a long career in probate, divorce and the admiralty divisions of the courts following his promotion to the Queen's Bench, concurrently holding his position as the head of a 'huge' legal practice which focused upon insurance and mercantile law.<sup>107</sup> Nor is it surprising that Edmund Hornby was in concurrence with the wider view of the CA. He had, as noted, been the first incumbent of the post of Chief Judge in Shanghai some years before and he believed it was a 'great mistake' when the same two posts had been merged in the Levant some years previously.<sup>108</sup> These two friends, members of the legal profession, were certainly in complete agreement on the matter and this was a view Lord Hannen was willing to espouse publically.

Indeed, observing, to the laughter of the assembled guests, that this point 'was a somewhat ticklish question' he implored any of those present

who had control over these matters, to bear in mind the difficulties which beset any man who had to occupy those two posts—(hear, hear)—and he trusted, therefore, that all to whom this subject was interesting would extend indulgence to the man who had to overcome those difficulties—(cheers)—and assist him by their sympathy. He would only say from his knowledge of his character he was convinced nothing would be wanting

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<sup>106</sup> Edmund Hornby to R.S. Gundry, 17 February 1892, Cambridge University Library, Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, Richard Simpson Gundry: Correspondence and Papers, MS Add.9269/61.

<sup>107</sup> Patrick Polden, 'Hannen, James, Baron Hannen (1821–1894)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004; on (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12216>, last accessed 19 December 2016).

<sup>108</sup> Edmund Hornby, *Sir Edmund Hornby: An Autobiography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), p.144.

on the part of his brother to discharge the onerous duties which devolved upon him with justice and efficiency.<sup>109</sup>

Two points of this speech are of particular interest. First, Hannen's clear efforts to ensure the sympathy and support of the CA and its members for his brother's situation. Secondly, and of greater importance, were Lord Hannen's comments directed at the Foreign Office, when he stressed that those present 'who had control over these matters' would do well to understand the difficulties his brother was facing in fulfilling the post. It was likely no coincidence that present that very evening as a guest of the CA was Sir Thomas Sanderson, under-secretary for Foreign Affairs. Sanderson was an important figure in the Foreign Office, and although ultimately decision on Foreign Policy rested with the Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister, He, alongside Francis Bertie (the CA's main Foreign Office contact), are regarded as having made a 'significant contribution to the foreign policy-making process' between 1894 and 1905. Indeed, Sanderson, it has been argued, 'shaped policy to considerable degree, and certainly took charge of much of the day-to-day business of the Office.'<sup>110</sup> Certainly, he was a valuable guest for the CA to have invited on this occasion.

In Lord Hannen, then, the CA had found—through the personal connections of Sir Edmund Hornby—a well-respected ally with a wealth of legal experience who supported their cause to separate these two posts. Through their annual dinner they had given him an opportunity to air these views to the relevant members of the British government. By reproduction of the speech in newspapers—although reporting of the CA dinner was somewhat limited, appearing only, it seems, in *The London and China Telegraph*—the case could also be given greater public prominence.

Turning to the periphery, we find the CA's involvement in the matter continued. Nicholas J. Hannen himself chaired the annual dinner of the Shanghai Branch, held at the Shanghai club, in 1894. He was seemingly unafraid to discuss the matter in stark terms, and in proposing the toast of continued prosperity to the Shanghai branch, he joked that

It seems to me, gentlemen, ever since you have been in existence you have been finding fault with the British government and its officers. (laughter) You begin by saying that I ought not to be here in one of the capacities which I am. (laughter). That was the first thing you said, but you did not succeed. (Renewed laughter) But perhaps you will do us all some good.

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<sup>109</sup> The Dinner, 1892, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>110</sup> Otte, *The China Question*, p.22.

You are very like the slave-driver who whacks us all indiscriminately; if we did our work there would be no necessity for you, the slave-driver with your whip. No doubt some of us want it very badly. All I can say is that notwithstanding this I wish you every success. I wish your whip may stir us up to do our duty properly and that it may fall on all backs—except my own. (Laughter and Cheers)<sup>111</sup>

This was not the end of Hannen's own involvement in the matter. When he returned to Britain in 1895, still holding the combined post, he was invited to the CA's annual dinner. Called upon to propose the toast made to the officers of the Association, he was, he admitted, placed in an awkward position. To the assembled crowd he joked that it 'was a little bit hard that he should have to propose the health of gentlemen who appeared to have an inveterate dislike to the position which he held. (Laughter and Cheers).' However, he also noted that 'Perhaps they did not feel any greater dislike [for the post] than he himself. But there he was, and there he had to remain.'<sup>112</sup> It is clear that Hannen himself held no support for the combination of the posts, and it is certainly possible it was to the British government he was referring, in relation to the combination, when he talked of those who wanted the 'whip' of the CA 'very badly.' By inviting Hannen to these two dinners he was given occasion to air his views to both the Shanghai and London press, and on the second occasion, to the members of the Foreign Office and other government departments always invited to the CA's dinners. The CA's dinners, it seemed, could be of use not only as a vehicle to espouse their own views, but even as a channel for members of British government in China to do the same to their superiors in London.

To draw the history of CA opposition to the combination of these two posts to a close, reference is required to one further dinner. Held in 1897 the honour of responding to the toast given to the guests was, on this occasion, given to George Jamieson. Jamieson (who would later serve as chairman, vice-chairman and president of the CA) was currently employed to fill the combined role of HM consul in Shanghai and Assistant Judge of HM Supreme Court, both roles one rank below those filled by Nicholas Hannen.<sup>113</sup> In proposing the toast to which Jamieson would reply, Association member E.H. Pollard joked Jamieson had been 'tarred with the same

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<sup>111</sup> "The China Association (Shanghai Branch)" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 02 February 1894, p.22.

<sup>112</sup> The Dinner, 26 February 1895, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>113</sup> The China Association: The annual dinner, 1897, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.



brush' as his 'chief' in Shanghai. When responding to the toast, and to the applause of the crowd, Jamieson was able to inform the gathering that 'he believed he was not overstepping the bounds of official discretion in saying that steps were now in progress which would result in the separation of the two posts at Shanghai at no distant date.'<sup>114</sup> Indeed, a report commissioned by the Foreign Office had agreed that the two posts should again be separated earlier in the year, with *The Times* able to announce that the two posts had been separated in December of 1897.<sup>115</sup> Nicholas Hannen continued to fill the post of Chief Justice, with the Association's most recent guest, George Jamieson, taking up the role of Consul General in Shanghai.<sup>116</sup>

Through a series of dinners, then, held in 1892, 1894, 1895 and 1897 the CA continued to press for the separation of these two posts. Though not done by pressing the Foreign Office through what might be considered more official channels, this instead took place through viewpoints presented to Foreign Office officials at the public gatherings that were the dinners of the CA.<sup>117</sup> These dinners saw displeasure at the combination of the post expressed by both the man fulfilling the post and his brother, himself a well-respected legal practitioner. Furthermore, they had allowed the CA the chance to dine and renew links with Nicholas Hannen on his return to Britain on leave, and had allowed them the chance to forge new links with George Jamieson before his ascension to the post when the two were again split.

While this was one prominent use of these dinners, it must also be remembered that the audience for the speeches given by prominent CA members did not simply consist of the official guests for the evening. Indeed, the majority of those present were already members of the CA. As such, the speeches made at these events must also be seen as efforts to spread the views of the speakers amongst the wider membership, and to persuade members, in order to achieve consensus on issues amongst the CA membership. A striking example of this can be found in 1906, when Charles Stewart Addis of the HSBC called for the members of the Association to focus upon fair dealing with Chinese partners and the Chinese populace, stating:

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> "The Far East." *Times* (London, England) 31 May 1897p. 4; "It has been decided on public grounds to." *Times* (London, England) 8 December 1897 p. 11.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> For a study of how such dinners can be utilised for political means, although in respect of influencing the foreign policy of another country, see Bowman, *The origin, formation and activities of the Pilgrims Society. The Canada Club*, comprised of returnees from Canada, also hosted dinners with similar aims. See Burke, 'Canada in Britain', pp.188-9.

Say what you like, the old "Gunboat policy" as it was called, is as dead as the dodo, and should be decently interred, neatly ticketed and labelled for the benefit of the future historian in the limbo of extinct and half forgotten ideas. Only by doing as we would be done by is it possible to justify and maintain British ascendancy in the Far East, and we are under an obligation to the late Governor of Hongkong, which I felt I must acknowledge, for giving timely and pointed emphasis to that cardinal truth. (Cheers).<sup>118</sup>

Addis was one of the earliest British proponents of such a move, and despite his efforts, as we shall see later, it took some time before the CA would align with his views more broadly.<sup>119</sup>

#### *Dining prominent individuals, and the visit of Li Hongzhang*

Alongside the invitation of official guests to all dinners, a series of dinners were also held in honour of single, particularly prominent, individuals. Recorded in Table 3.1 below, they took a similar format to annual dinners, with a series of toasts and speeches given, before the gathering retired for informal conversation. These dinners were, by their very nature, however, more political affairs, held with the main aim of allowing the CA to place their views on China and East Asia in front of these men and to give members an opportunity to meet these men on a personal basis. As such, they seem to have attracted less of the wider membership of the CA, who as noted elsewhere disliked overly political gatherings and instead preferred to attend the annual dinners. On these occasions, speeches were often of a highly political nature, and would on occasion be directly targeted at the guests. In 1906, for example, Thomas Jackson of the HSBC suggested to Duke T'sai Tze that the Chinese government would be best reformed along the lines of the government of India.<sup>120</sup> Similarly, these events offered a key opportunity to inform departing Governors of Hongkong of the views of the CA. Often, these men would have had no experience of East Asia, having come from other colonial postings. An opportunity to outline the CA's current view of how British interests would best progress in China, before the Governors had any chance to

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<sup>118</sup> Annual report for 1907, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>119</sup> Addis maintained wide contacts in intellectual and missionary circles, and believed not only that Western reform would be key in reshaping China, but also that the Western powers had responsibilities to China itself. See Roberta Allbert Dayer, *Finance and Empire: Sir Charles Addis, 1861-1945* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1988), pp.74. See also Phoebe Chow, *British Opinion and Policy towards China, 1922-1927*, pp.130-1.

<sup>120</sup> Interim report for 1906, appendix pp.131-2, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

**Table 3.1:** The individuals given China Association dinners in their honour

Date	Guest of Honour	Further Information
1896 and 1899	Sir Claude MacDonald	Claude MacDonald had previously had a career as a soldier and administrator, before receiving his first large post as minister of China in 1896. He would later become British ambassador to Japan. <sup>121</sup> The first dinner was given prior to MacDonald's departure to take up a new post of minister to China. No detailed record of the dinner exists as reporters were not admitted.
1896	Li Hongzhang	dinner given whilst the Chinese statesman was on a tour of Russia, Europe and America. Li was a noted moderniser in China, though his influence in the Chinese government was at an all-time low by this point. <sup>122</sup> See below for a detailed discussion of this event.
1898	Sir Henry Arthur Blake	Blake had fifteen years of experience as a colonial Governor by this time, and would serve as Governor of Hongkong from 1898 to 1903. <sup>123</sup> The dinner was given prior to Blake's departure to take up this post.
1906	Duke T'Sai Tze	dinner given to the duke and his entourage, who were in Europe to study Western methods of government <sup>124</sup>
1907	Sir Frederick Lugard	Lugard had an interesting career as a soldier, 'adventurer', and East Africa Company employee, before becoming Governor of Nigeria and, later, Hongkong. <sup>125</sup> The dinner was given prior to Lugard's departure to take up the post.

<sup>121</sup> E. W. Edwards, 'MacDonald, Sir Claude Maxwell (1852–1915)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34699>, last accessed 14 December 2016).

<sup>122</sup> Li had been placed in control of the Chinese forces during the Sino-Japanese war of 1895 which saw China easily defeated. Following this, he was left in a state of 'political disgrace'. See Samuel C. Chu and Kwang-Ching Liu (eds.), *Li Hung Chang and China's Early Modernization* (New York: East Gate, 1994), p.275.

<sup>123</sup> A brief overview of his tenure is given in Welsh, *A History of Hongkong*, pp.330-342.

<sup>124</sup> Annual report for 1906, appendix pp.126-35, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05. The speech made by the Duke at the dinner was reported upon as far afield as the United States, albeit in the Editorial of the rather niche publication space of the 'Editorial', *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, 37 (1906), p.464.

<sup>125</sup> A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, 'Lugard, Frederick John Dealtry, Baron Lugard (1858–1945)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34628>, last accessed 17 October 2017).

1908	Sir Robert Hart	Hart headed the Foreign inspectorate of the Chinese Maritime Customs service, a major source of revenue for the Chinese government from 1863 until 1907, when, refused retirement, he instead received a series of one year leaves. Although no longer directly at the head of the body, he was heavily involved in the decision of naming of his successor. <sup>126</sup>
1920	His Excellency Chu Chi Chien	H.E. Chu Chi Chien was a retired Chinese statesmen, who had served as premier of the Chinese government as well as Minister of Communications and Minister of the Interior. <sup>127</sup> The Dinner was given to Chien whilst he was on a tour of Britain to study the countries 'municipal and industrial conditions.' <sup>128</sup> The CA proclaimed themselves in 'entire sympathy' with Chu Chien's aims of spreading 'the knowledge of Chinese civilisation in this country and of western civilisation in China'. <sup>129</sup>
1932	Sir Miles Lampson	Lampson served for much of his career in East Asia, including postings in Tokyo and Peking, before becoming British Minister to China in 1926, a post he held until 1933. <sup>130</sup>
1933	Alexander Cadogan	Cadogan had a long background in working with the League of Nations. However, dismayed by the lack of success of the body he rejected suggestions he might become the League's secretary general, and was instead pleased to be appointed to his new role at the British legation in China. He became ambassador in 1935 when the legation became an embassy, before returning to Britain in 1936. <sup>131</sup> The dinner was given prior to Cadogan's departure to take up the post.

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<sup>126</sup> Frank H. H. King, 'Hart, Sir Robert, first baronet (1835–1911)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33739>, last accessed 14 December 2016).

<sup>127</sup> "Distinguished Chinese Visitor" *Times* (London, England) 3 May 1921 p.9.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Annual report for 1920, appendix pp.25-7, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07.

<sup>130</sup> David Steeds, 'Lampson, Miles Wedderburn, first Baron Killearn (1880–1964)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34387>, last accessed 14 December 2016).

<sup>131</sup> Gore-Booth, 'Cadogan, Sir Alexander George Montagu (1884–1968)', rev. G. R. Berridge, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32234>, last accessed 14 December 2016).

formulate their own opinion from first-hand experience could, in theory, have been exceptionally valuable.

A dinner given in 1896 to Chinese dignitary Li Hongzhang received particular prominence in the press, and allows us further insight into how these occasions proceeded and the opportunities they offered. Li Hongzhang was, in theory, not a natural ally for the CA to have sought. He was a noted proponent of the 'self-strengthening' programme which sought to utilize western technology to improve the Chinese Empire, and was also one of the first Chinese officials to establish modern industries, including the China Merchants Steam Navigation Company, the Kaiping Mining Company and the Shanghai Cotton Cloth Mill, all founded in the 1870s.<sup>132</sup> These were designed as competitors to foreign firms, and in the long run intended to diminish the profitability of foreign business (and therefore foreign influence) in China by making it economically unviable.<sup>133</sup> Yet the events of 1894/5 had largely negated such concerns. Defeated in the Sino-Japanese War, a scramble began to gain concessions and profit from a weakened China. Li had been personally involved in this defeat—commanding the forces he had seen modernized under the banner of self-strengthening—and with it came a drastic loss of power in the Chinese court. Despite these factors he remained China's most experienced diplomat and was sent to Russia to secretly conclude a treaty for support against the other Western powers and Japan in the wars aftermath.<sup>134</sup> It was as an extension of his travels to Russia that he visited Britain, and against the background of a scramble for concessions that the CA dined him.

The CA were well aware of Li's loss of status before his arrival in the country. Sir Edmund Hornby wrote to CA secretary R.S. Gundry, stating that

Personally, I think you will be wasting your money on [dining] the clever old Humbug. As to touch his feelings—he has none—or if he has they lie so close at the bottom of breeches—packed that you cannot get at them. His day is over—and he will never again experience any real authority... Don't waste a farthing on him and if he gorges himself and 'busts up' afterwards the world will say 'the China Association poisoned him.'<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Wellington K.K. Chan, 'Government, merchants and industry to 1911' in J.K. Fairbank and Kwang-Ching Liu eds., *The Cambridge History of China Volume 11: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.423.

<sup>133</sup> Chan, 'Government, merchants and industry to 1911', p.417 and pp.437-8.

<sup>134</sup> Chu and Liu (eds.), *Li Hung Chang and China's Early Modernization*, p.273.

<sup>135</sup> Edmund Hornby to R.S. Gundry, 16 June 1896, Richard Simpson Gundry: Correspondence and Papers, MS Add.9269/65.

Despite these warnings, the CA progressed ahead with plans to dine Li. Although his arrival date coincided with the end of the London season and saw ‘many people leaving town’ the chairman concluded that alongside the Lord Mayors’ plans to host a reception and efforts by the London Chamber of Commerce, the CA should host a dinner in his honour at the Whitehall rooms. We may only speculate as to how the CA ensured their dinner would be included in Li’s itinerary, however that his entire stay in Britain was organised and overseen by the CA’s primary Foreign Office contact F.L. Bertie could, certainly, have been to the CA’s benefit here.<sup>136</sup> Certainly, there was some communication between the CA and the Foreign Office prior to Li’s visit, with Bertie writing to secretary R.S. Gundry to request a ‘list of people interested in China’, perhaps to help construct Li’s wider itinerary, and to inform the CA of his date of arrival and title he would be using whilst in Britain.<sup>137</sup> Regardless of the how the CA secured the chance to dine him, the chairman noted Li’s visit was ‘an event in our relations with China’ and so ‘[The Association] should not fall short of what had been done elsewhere.’ To this end the CA authorised a spend of £1-10-0 per head for the dinner, causing an ultimate loss of £94-6-6 in dining the 172 attendees.<sup>138</sup>

The outlay, at least, seems to have produced considerable results, which are partially viewable below in Illustration 3.2. The *London Daily News* offered its opinion that ‘Seldom have more pains been taken to make the Whitehall rooms attractive. Beautiful clusters of growing plants—hydrangeas, yellow chrysanthemums, and sun flowers—were arranged at the font of the palms in the entrance hall.’ The menu was not recorded, although it was noted that ‘it was not a Chinese dinner: it was such a one as is customarily served at the Hotel Metropole.’<sup>139</sup> For those present, the chance for networking was not one which was missed. Arriving ‘seated in his wheelchair, his excellency [Li] was conveyed along the corridor to the Victorian rooms, where many members of the Association and guests were presented to him. He beamed and bowed, gracious to all, and positively genial to some’ and, as *The Glasgow Herald* noted, before the dinner ‘through the medium of an interpreter,

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<sup>136</sup> “Li Hung Chang’s Visit.” *The Standard* (London, England), 29 July 1896.

<sup>137</sup> Francis Bertie to R.S. Gundry, 24 July 1896, Richard Simpson Gundry: Correspondence and Papers, MS Add.9269/15.

<sup>138</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 16 June 1896, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>139</sup> “Li Hung Chang at a Banquet.” *London Daily News* (London, England), 8 August 1896.

**Illustration 3.1:** China Association dinner booklet, 1905, containing a menu, toast list, and seating plan for the evening

source: Papers of Sir Charles Stewart Addis, SOAS Library, University of London,  
PP MS 14/011/303





**Illustration 3.2:** The China Association, dinner in honour of His Excellency, Li Hongzhang, Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Metropole, London, 7 August 1896<sup>140</sup>

Source: China Association records, SOAS, London, CHAS/P/01



<sup>140</sup> Li is seated at the centre of the top table. Seated at the ends of the other tables (to the right of the image, and next to the members of Li's entourage) from bottom to top of the image are Association founder Sir Alfred Dent, Chairman William Keswick (of Jardine Matheson), Sir Thomas Sutherland (of the P&O), Ewen Cameron (of the HSBC) and J.H. Gwyther (of the Chartered Bank)



Mr Lo Teng Luh, a number of gentlemen conversed with him.’<sup>141</sup> As the dinner progressed, Li ‘exchanged many thoughts with his right hand neighbour [his interpreter], and, through him, with the chairman and with Mr. Curzon.’<sup>142</sup> Curzon was, as noted above, currently under-secretary of state at the Foreign Office, and, in his role as an MP, ‘chief foreign policy spokesman in the commons’ for the government, and his attendance and the opportunity this presented him for such conversation highlights the benefits even the British government could draw from their relationship with the CA. Chances for networking were not restricted to Curzon, however. Although Li was the principal guest ‘here and there a Chinese national costume’—worn by Li’s entourage—‘relieved the monotony of the conventional British evening dress.’<sup>143</sup> These men were seated next to prominent CA members, ‘Lord Li’ and ‘Mr. Li Ching-Sou’—Li Hongzhang’s sons—were seated next to William Keswick of Jardine Matheson and Alfred Dent of Dent Bros., and CA chairman and vice-chairman, respectively.<sup>144</sup> Mr. K Tseng was seated next to Thomas Sutherland, head of the P&O, Mr Lin Y-You next to Ewen Cameron of the HSBC, and finally Mr Lien Fang next to R.S. Gundry, the CA’s secretary. Sir Halliday Macartney, who had for a number of years served as the secretary to the Chinese minister in London was similarly present, and seated within conversational distance of Keswick. Rumours that attributed a familial link between Macartney and Li—it was suggested his Chinese wife was a relation of the Chinese statesman—seem to have been, indeed, only rumours.<sup>145</sup>

Nor was the opportunity missed for making grand statements directly to Li in this public arena. William Keswick insisted in his speech that ‘the most important matter to be urged upon China was the opening of all her rivers and navigable waters to steam navigation. Nothing would so influence prosperity as good means of

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<sup>141</sup> “Li Hung Chang at a Banquet.” *London Daily News* (London, England), 8 August 1896; “Li Hung Chang with the China Association.” *Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), 8 August July 1896.

<sup>142</sup> “Li Hung Chang at a Banquet.” *London Daily News* (London, England), 8 August 1896.

<sup>143</sup> “Li Hung Chang with the China Association.” *Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), 8 August 1896.

<sup>144</sup> Li Hung Chang: Banquet by the China Association, 7 August 1896, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1 contains a seating plan from the event, and also a clipping of a report of the dinner from an unspecified newspaper which mentions the two men as being Li’s sons.

<sup>145</sup> Demetrius Charles Boulger, *The Life of Sir Halliday Macartney, K.C.M.G: Commander of Li Hung Chang’s Trained Force in the Taiping Rebellion, Founder of the First Chinese Arsenals, for Thirty Years Councillor and Secretary to the Chinese Legation in London* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head Press, 1908), p.142.

transport.<sup>146</sup> Such an opinion had been made clear in the CA's reports of 1893/4, and 1895/6 and was by this point a considerable aim of the Association.<sup>147</sup> The personal benefit to Keswick of such a development—as head of Jardine Matheson, engaged in both trading and shipping—is not difficult to locate, and one can only assume this was something Li was well aware of.

It seems that, overall, an enjoyable evening was had by (most) of those who attended. Li's speech, given through his interpreter, was met with numerous cheers, and in closing Li remarked that 'I sincerely wish you all happiness and prosperity, and trust that the China Association may grow in influence and may always be able to discuss international commerce from the broad point of view of both countries.'<sup>148</sup> Li 'apparently enjoyed the surroundings, though, according to his usual custom, he could not be said to dine' (Edmund Hornby's earlier fear of Li gorging himself apparently not coming to pass).<sup>149</sup> It was remarked upon in both the dinner report placed in the CA's files and that of the *London Daily News* that Li found much amusement, too, in a joke made which alluded to censorship in China, at which he 'laughed heartily.'<sup>150</sup> Less enjoyment, it seems, was had by a member of Li's entourage who, upon feeling sick, was offered champagne by a waiter which only served to make the problem worse.<sup>151</sup> Overall, the evening was a success, and it seems the enjoyment was not even tempered by what the *London Daily News* described as

A singular incident [which] occurred during the banquet. Accompanied by two ladies an elderly and well known banker who is staying at the hotel entered the banqueting hall, bent on seeing the distinguished Chinese statesmen. But this, of course, could not be permitted. The head waiter bade the intruders at once depart, and this they were prevailed upon to do, though with ruffled feathers.<sup>152</sup>

Unfortunately, the CA's records make no mention of this, and we are left in the dark as to the true identity, and motives, of this interloper.

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<sup>146</sup> Li Hung Chang: Banquet by the China Association, 7 August 1896, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1

<sup>147</sup> See annual reports for 1893-4, pp.5-6 and 1895-6, p.8 available at Annual Reports, 1889-98, CHAS/A/01 for the CA urging this for the West River in China.

<sup>148</sup> Li Hung Chang: Banquet by the China Association, 7 August 1896, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Li Hung Chang: Banquet by the China Association, 7 August 1896, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1 1; "Li Hung Chang at a Banquet." *London Daily News* (London, England), 8 August 1896.

<sup>151</sup> "Li Hung Chang at a Banquet." *London Daily News* (London, England), 8 August 1896.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

Ultimately, we cannot prove that this dinner had any tangible outcomes, such as the nature of the records it left behind. However, what we can say is that those who attended were, at least, given the chance to speak to a prominent Chinese delegation to Britain in some manner and attempt to build networks. These benefits even extended to British government officials present, and for William Keswick the evening gave an opportunity to make direct representations to Li Hongzhang in public regarding matters that were key to his firm, Jardine Matheson. On a wider level, dining Li was at least a grand gesture by the CA, and ensured that they were able to showcase their hospitality on the occasion of his visit.

It is apt, here, to make one final point about these official dinners. The first of these was held, as noted in table 3.1, to host Claude MacDonald before he departed to take up a post as British minister to China. Such was the nature of the evening that reporters were not admitted, leaving us largely in the dark about what was discussed. Whether this was due to the overtly confidential and political nature of these discussions we can only speculate, however we do know from CA's annual report for the year that the CA urged him consider the need for an extension to the Shanghai international settlement before his departure.<sup>153</sup> This, ultimately, only serves to increase the frustration caused when investigating such events and their uses, with discussions hinted at as politically significant, but rarely clearly visible.

Alongside these political manoeuvres undertaken at the formal dinners, it is important to emphasise that the other social functions held by the Association had a political side. As mentioned above luncheons later replaced the formal dinners of the Association, becoming the key CA tool for attempting to build personal links with officials and prominent men for political ends. By bringing together committee members who represented various British firms interested in East Asia with these officials the CA continued to possess the opportunity to outline their vision of the East Asian trade to those who held greater influence over the trade than they themselves.

Though few records exist for the majority of these luncheons—discussions presumably being of a private and confidential nature—a luncheon given to five Chinese government members engaged on a 'Goodwill Mission' to Britain and the Chinese ambassador in 1943 gives some insight. The annual report of that year records that 'speeches were exchanged, in which post-war trade and business in China formed

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<sup>153</sup> Annual report for 1896-7, p.x, available at Annual Reports, 1889-98, CHAS/A/01.

the main topics.’ Indeed, in these speeches the CA chairman outlined his pleasure—though rather prematurely, as later developments would show—that the mission had eased his fears that the Chinese government might ‘adopt a policy of comparative isolation’ and reduce foreign trade following the war. Furthermore, the chairman pledged that those businessmen the CA represented would ‘fully recognise that those of us who return to live in China will live and carry on our business according to the law of China’, an important statement following the recent British surrender of extraterritoriality. The Chairman also insisted that he was keenly aware that British business must do more to overcome its lack of knowledge of the Chinese language, in order to improve relations. In response, the Chinese ambassador praised the CA as ‘an institution which had always played an important role in fostering trade relations between the two countries’ and outlined that ‘in his opinion it would still have a greater role to play in this respect in the future.’<sup>154</sup> Similarly, although the content of the meeting itself is not recorded, at a 1947 luncheon given to the Governor of Hongkong ‘the opportunity was taken to put before him the views of the committee with regard to the more important questions facing Hongkong.’<sup>155</sup>

The receptions of the CA, too, may have served a political purpose, although this cannot be said for certain. Although speeches were not given, official guests—as with the Association’s formal dinners—were invited to attend free of charge. Those invited in 1937 included the Foreign Secretary, Foreign Office representatives, the chief economic advisor to the British government and the Chinese Minister, alongside two Chinese Doctors, and the wives of all those mentioned.<sup>156</sup> Again, this would allow the members who attended a potentially useful networking event through which to create links.

However, whilst Chinese guests such as those noted above commonly attended later CA functions—and the wider membership had long accepted the need to hold dinners for visiting Chinese dignitaries due to the potential political and commercial benefits—the question of their admission to the CA’s dinners was one which caused considerable disagreement. Indeed, this was one of the few times the CA struggled in

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<sup>154</sup> Annual report for 1943, pp.11-14, available at Annual Reports, 1942-53, CHAS/A/10A.

<sup>155</sup> Annual report for 1947, p.12, available at Annual Reports, 1942-53, CHAS/A/10A.

<sup>156</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 March 1937, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

tailoring the social functions of the Association to the twin goals of sociability and politics.

### **Balancing politics and sociability: The admission of Chinese guests to social functions**

Asian guests were not a prominent feature of early CA social gatherings, unless the dinner was held specifically in their honour. Although the Vice-Governor of the Bank of Japan was present in 1904, he was invited by an individual member, rather than the committee.<sup>157</sup> One Chinese guest—Wu Yen Lin—was also present at the annual dinner of 1906, but no further records exist to suggest this was repeated, or even considered, at least until 1924.<sup>158</sup> At a meeting in December of that year—one month after that year's annual dinner—the General Committee were asked by the chairman to consider whether individual members should be allowed to invite Chinese guests. The committee, after discussion 'agreed that it would be undesirable to have Chinese at the Dinner and it was hoped therefore that members of the Association would refrain from inviting them.'<sup>159</sup> Such invitations would not have been without precedent from the history of British involvement in China—as early as 1835 a St. Andrews dinner organised by William Jardine of Jardine Matheson & Co. saw an important Canton merchant invited, to help foster networks.<sup>160</sup> In more recent memory British minister Sir John Jordan (later to be CA president) had invited prominent Chinese to the Kings Birthday celebrations held at the British Legation in Peking from 1911, and princesses of the Qing Court had been hosted to lunch at the Legation soon after the Boxer Uprising.<sup>161</sup> It is interesting to note that at a luncheon in 1925 the CA seemingly had no problems with the invitation of Robert Ho-Tung, of Eurasian heritage, though his wealth and high social status in Hongkong presumably alleviated any worries, as, perhaps, would have the fact the gathering was a luncheon rather than a dinner.<sup>162</sup>

By 1928 wider events again focused discussion on the matter. A Chinese nationalist movement, which had been growing for some time, had begun to expand

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<sup>157</sup> Annual report for 1904-05, appendix pp.96-102, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.

<sup>158</sup> Annual report for 1906, appendix p.55, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.

<sup>159</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 3 December 1924, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>160</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.169.

<sup>161</sup> Hoare, *Embassies in the East*, pp.56-8.

<sup>162</sup> Annual report for 1925-6, appendix pp.6-14, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08

its reach and gained momentum after the events of 30 May 1925.<sup>163</sup> During a protest over the killing of a Chinese worker by a Japanese foreman, British led police opened fire on the assembled crowd on Nanking Road, killing thirteen protestors and seriously wounding twenty, alongside numerous others injured.<sup>164</sup> This incident provided great impetus to the Chinese nationalist and anti-foreign movements, which came to be known as the May Thirtieth Movement, and saw a number of boycotts of foreign goods between 1925 and 1937.<sup>165</sup> In response to these events, British officials in China were forced to undertake a radical overhaul of their strategy. Efforts were made to rein in the power of the Shanghai Municipal Council, and realign control in the hands of an alliance of big business interests and the British government.<sup>166</sup> As part of this, new personal social relations were to be formed with prominent Chinese by both British government employees, and the employees of key firms such as Swires. Indeed, G.W. Swire had personally taken the lead, and was a key backer of such proposals when they emerged and were discussed by the CA.<sup>167</sup> Such moves to increase co-operation were highly important for large firms such as Swires, and other major CA backer Jardine Matheson. As owners of China Coast shipping firms, they could not risk a further deterioration in relations with Chinese elites as the majority of the goods they shipped were the goods of Chinese merchants.<sup>168</sup> For the government, British minister Sir Miles Lampson lead the way in China, with his social gatherings that often involved drinking contests between British and Chinese guests.<sup>169</sup>

Against this background the CA once again considered the question of inviting prominent Chinese guests to their annual dinners. Limited in the amount of Chinese guests they could invite by their London location they chose the best possible candidate—the Chinese ambassador. The CA dinner represented perhaps the event with the most potential—at least in Britain—to display a new willingness to work with China through building social ties, and accepting prominent Chinese into British social circles. The admission of such Chinese guests to these dinners in this period would have been an important and deliberate public gesture by the CA and the firms and members it represented.

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<sup>163</sup> Ku, 'Urban Mass Movement: The May Thirtieth Movement in Shanghai', pp.199-203.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., Gerth, *China Made*, chapter four.

<sup>166</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.115-162.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., pp.179.

<sup>168</sup> Osterhammel, 'Imperialism in Transition', p.269.

<sup>169</sup> Hoare, *Embassies in the East*, p.58.

Despite these potential benefits the CA chairman noted the move would be problematic. There would have to be ‘restraint in the proceedings at the Dinner and more particularly restriction on the freedom of comments and criticisms in the speeches.’<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, ‘it would be necessary to ask the Chinese representative himself to speak.’<sup>171</sup> Despite this, he was in favour of the proposal. If they were to invite the Chinese Minister it would, he thought, be a decision ‘noted with pleasure by the Chinese, and possibly regarded as a gesture of friendly encouragement.’<sup>172</sup> Yet after discussion, the Committee came to the same decision as they had four years before. Worried that the ‘character of the function would be greatly altered and the general freedom which had characterised it for so long, be much restricted’ the plan was rejected.<sup>173</sup> The following year again saw the matter raised, though on this occasion it was adjourned for later consideration.<sup>174</sup>

However the matter was not left to rest, somewhat unusually for the CA, which was normally quick to settle internal disputes. In 1931—the same year in which the CA changed its stance on the surrender of extraterritoriality and treaty privileges in China (discussed later in this chapter)—the matter came under further consideration. Unhappy that the matter had once again been brought to consideration, a Mr. Mackay stated his belief that the question had been settled two years ago and he remained of the same opinion: to invite the Chinese Ambassador would alter the whole character of the function, and for the worse. This view was resoundingly rebuffed by both Stanley H. Dodwell and G.W. Swire, eponymous heads of their own trading firms, former diplomat Sir Harry Fox and Association chairman Sidney F. Mayers (potentially representative of both Jardine Matheson and the HSBC through his role in the BCC).<sup>175</sup> The Chairman, Mayers—who had a long history of pressing for co-operation with Asian partners, aiming as early as 1912 to involve Japanese co-operation in a BCC scheme—stated that, in fact, the ‘object in view’ was indeed to change the ‘complexion of the function.’ He believed that it was time to alter the ‘quasi-political character of the dinner to a more social type of function’, with Stanley

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<sup>170</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 24 October 1928, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 7 August 1929, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>175</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 June 1931, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

Dodwell agreeing that ‘long speeches appeared to have grown into a custom, which, he believed, a large number of the ordinary members would be pleased to see discontinued.’ Both agreed that the Chinese minister should be invited in this case, a proposal carried after further discussion by a vote of twelve to five.<sup>176</sup>

The decision fits consistently with the CA’s growing conscious effort to replicate moves being made by British business interests and the British government in China. By removing political speeches from the agenda, they could safely invite the Chinese minister and other Chinese guests without fear of offending them. Furthermore, a less formal function would allow greater chance of building true personal links with these men. In effect, this decision to on the surface de-politicise the dinner in fact allowed the occasions potential for political gain to increase. Alongside building new social links the CA dinners would offer a gesture to China as a whole that British business did indeed see Chinese as equals, and were willing to work alongside them on fair terms. This is perhaps summed up best by committee member H.G. Simms, who reflected that

Times have changed and that it was desirable to review our attitude. From the trend of events it seemed that we were now to work with the Chinese, therefore let the Association show its willingness to co-operate by breaking with an old tradition and inviting the Chinese minister to the dinner.<sup>177</sup>

Closing the discussion, G.W. Swire speculated that ‘the presence of the Chinese Minister at the dinner would be appreciated by the Chinese and in any case would be a beau geste’ and the matter was settled with the minority agreeing ‘at once’ to accept the will of the majority.<sup>178</sup>

Unfortunately, no reports survive of the annual dinners for 1931 and 1932, however, the Chinese Ambassador was present the following year. Given the honour of a toast, and requested to respond to the toast to the guests as a whole, His Excellency Guo Taiqi spoke at length upon the matter of Sino-British relationships, against the background of the Manchurian Crisis and the Japanese establishment of Manzhouguo, and closed his remarks by insisting that

By associating me with the other guests and by asking me to return their thanks to-night you have made me feel that I am almost one of you—(hear, hear)—or that you are close to us. It is, indeed, a happy way, if I may say

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid.; Davis ‘Financing Imperialism’, pp.246-7.

<sup>177</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 June 1931.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.



so, of expressing the unity of purpose and the community of interest between the Governments and peoples of our two countries (Loud applause).<sup>179</sup>

Although it had taken some time for the CA to adjust its social functions, and break with the traditions of the past, it did not require a long wait before the new direction adopted by the committee bore fruit. From this point onwards, the Chinese Minister was a frequent guest at the Association's larger functions, as well as smaller luncheons held by the committee.<sup>180</sup>

Emphasising the new shift in relations, the CA's reception of 1936 saw a number of Chinese guests invited, a further improvement upon only hosting the current Chinese ambassador. At a function which was 'against anyone remembering their officialdom' the ambassador was soon reportedly 'dancing with that gracefulness which, with the art of perfect speech making, he imbibed at Pennsylvania University.'<sup>181</sup> Quickly, it seems, both the CA and the Chinese ambassador had adopted to new efforts to build social relations, and were at ease in one another's company. Much envied by the ladies present, too, was the 'black silk dress embroidered with large silver flowers, with short sleeves but high collar in Chinese style' worn by Mrs. Sun, who the writer noted 'always wears Chinese clothes and I am told that when at Ascot last week, she was the centre of all eyes.'<sup>182</sup>

In a short time—only ten years—the CA had come some distance, from regarding Chinese guests as 'undesirable' to joining them in dancing and envying their fashions. By doing so, the CA had made what efforts it could—though limited due to its London location—to build its own personal links with prominent Chinese, and fall in to line with the new wave of British policy encouraged after the May Thirtieth incident of 1925.

Overall, the CA's social gatherings were among the Association's most successful activities not least because the gatherings were largely successful in balancing social with political elements. The Association continued to entertain for

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<sup>179</sup> Annual report for 1933-4, appendix pp.25-28, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

<sup>180</sup> The Chinese Ambassador attended later dinners in 1934, 1935 and 1936 before the function itself was cancelled in 1939. He attended the Association's reception in 1936, before this too was cancelled in 1939. All information drawn from the annual reports of the China Association, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09 and Annual Reports, 1935-42, CHAS/A/10.

<sup>181</sup> "The China Association Soiree: Governor House Scene of Splendid Affair Attended by Past and Present Shanghai Residents" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 22 July 1936, p.31.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

political purposes throughout the period under consideration, whilst also retaining the popularity of the gatherings for those members interested predominantly in maintaining some form of sociability. Only over the question of admitting Chinese guests to the annual dinners was there any major disagreement over the form of the Association's social events, and even this was eventually settled without great contention. Through the official guests invited, we also gain some of our first insights into the political pressure points chosen by the CA. How these evolved beyond the CA's dinners to become potentially useful political tools, however, requires further investigation.

### **The China Association as a political pressure group**

In order to best understand the other methods of imparting political pressure available to the CA, it is necessary to approach the question in two ways. Firstly, a brief outline will be given of the methods and pressure points (alternatively called access points) available through which the CA could hope to guide political policy and offer feedback regarding the commercial environment, and how the CA developed relationships with these (beyond the use of social events as discussed above).<sup>183</sup> Following this exploration, a number case studies will be investigated to examine how these methods were applied practically, and to offer further insight into the operations of the CA and who directed its aims. Assessing the CA's overall success in its political lobbying, as previously mentioned, is something not undertaken due to the constraints of this study.

Firstly, we must return to the key pressure point outlined at the Association's formation by founder Alfred Dent, the Foreign Office. The British government departments were not large in this period, and turned to other sources, especially at the periphery of British interests, for efficient means of gathering information, be they bankers, newspaper correspondents, academics or otherwise.<sup>184</sup> Although this was not necessarily the case in China, this nonetheless ensured the government was open to receiving information through more informal networks, with business interests in the City of London noted as one key source.<sup>185</sup> As such the CA, receiving despatches and telegrams through business contacts and its branch structure in Asia, offered a valuable

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<sup>183</sup> For a discussion of access points, see Watts, *Pressure Groups*, pp.45-62.

<sup>184</sup> Anthony Best and John Fisher, *On the Fringes of Diplomacy: Influences on British Foreign Policy, 1800-1945* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), pp.1-9, but see also chapters two, three and four for further detail.

<sup>185</sup> Webster, *Gentlemen Capitalists: British imperialism in South East Asia, 1770-1890*, p.255.

information channel.<sup>186</sup> The CA wasted no time in ensuring the Foreign Office were aware of their existence, forwarding information received from Japan over treaty negotiations in 1890 to the Foreign Secretary, along with ‘a statement of the Objects, Rules and Regulations of the China Association’.<sup>187</sup> From then on, correspondence was exchanged regularly, and officers of the CA were often received in person at the Foreign Office.<sup>188</sup>

The creation of this link allowed the CA in London to establish a working relationship with the Foreign Office, and through it, a channel to offer their views to British officials in China. Although direct references from the British government to its value (or indeed, its lack of value) are limited, with such views not often recorded in Foreign Office files, glimpses can be seen. As early as 1896 British consul Byron Brenan undertook a tour to investigate war damage in areas of British settlement affected by the Sino-Japanese war at the suggestion of the CA.<sup>189</sup> By 1905 Ernest Satow, then British Minister for China, and a man who held an ardent dislike for the CA, was forced to admit they held at least some influence, complaining that the CA was ‘frequently too much listened to’ allowing them to be successful, for example, in being ‘the prime movers to have troops landed in Shanghai in 1900.’<sup>190</sup> Later efforts, such as those in 1923, for example, saw the CA suggest to the Foreign Office that railway police in China should be placed under European officers. The Foreign Office considered this a valuable suggestion, and forwarded this immediately to Peking.<sup>191</sup> A mutual trust seems to have developed, evidenced, for example, by chairman S.F. Mayers, and President Sir George Macdonogh being invited to view, and offer their comments upon, a confidential draft treaty composed by the Foreign Office dealing with extraterritoriality in advance of it being signed in 1931—we will return to this later.<sup>192</sup> As of 1939, and with conflict raging in East Asia, the Foreign Office was even prepared to allow the CA to utilise its channels of communication for commercial needs. A message, which the Foreign Office believed ‘to be in some commercial code’

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<sup>186</sup> Watts, *Pressure Groups*, p.47 notes this is still the case today for ‘specialist’ groups.

<sup>187</sup> Annual Report for 1890, unpaginated, available at Annual Reports, 1889-98, CHAS/A/01.

<sup>188</sup> Constrained by the limits of this thesis, an in depth investigation of this exchange of correspondence cannot be presented here. It was, however, voluminous, and led to an active dialogue.

<sup>189</sup> “Our London Correspondence.” *Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), 27 January. 1896.

<sup>190</sup> FO 800/44/3, Ernest Satow to Sir Edward Grey, 27 December 1905.

<sup>191</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 May 1923, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>192</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 8 June 1931, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

was sent from the acting consul-general in Tientsin to the CA London committee via the Foreign Office's own telegram service. Unfortunately the CA archives hold no copies of a cypher, and so the message remains unintelligible.<sup>193</sup> The CA was proud of its closeness of their relationship with the Foreign Office, and assured members representations to the Foreign Office received the 'greatest consideration' and 'utmost attention.'<sup>194</sup> Contemporaries to the CA, the American Asiatic Association, similarly expressed the view that the relations between the CA and the Foreign Office were 'intimate and mutually advantageous in respect of the collection and diffusion of accurate information.'<sup>195</sup> The above is certainly not intended to show CA influence over policy—this ultimately remains obscured—but even as only a minute sample of the correspondence and communications undertaken certainly evidences an active relationship between the two that gave the CA the chance to offer input as part of a wider policy community.

The relationship between the CA and the Colonial Office was one used less often. In smaller matters a few snapshots suggest that the CA was again, as with the Foreign Office, invited to participate in policy discussions. When an informal meeting was called at short notice to discuss an Anglo-Japanese convention relating to trade marks in China, for example, CA representatives were invited to attend.<sup>196</sup> Furthermore, and as discussed in chapter four, the Colonial Office subscribed a small sum towards the running expenses of the CA's school of Chinese. Ultimately, however, it seems the CA was largely excluded from the department's policy discussion process on matters of importance. A decision was taken to return the port of Wei-hai-wei to China, for example, despite CA complaints.<sup>197</sup>

Turning to other government departments we find more active relationships. During the First World War, for example, the Board of trade requested of the CA a short memorandum, no longer than seven paragraphs, outlining their view of the future

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<sup>193</sup> FO 371/23515/1874, Message in Code for China Association, 27 February 1939.

<sup>194</sup> The China Association: The annual dinner, 1897, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>195</sup> American Asiatic Association, *Constitution, History, List of Members*, p.20.

<sup>196</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 19 July 1910, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

<sup>197</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 11 October 1921, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5 sees the matter raised for the first time at the CA meetings. Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 4 April 1922, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5 sees the chairman inform the committee that the CA had not altered the views of the Colonial Office regarding its return to China.

of British trade in China. Such was the importance attached to this opportunity by the CA that the meeting called to draft this document was, to this point in the Association's history, the longest ever held.<sup>198</sup> The Second World War saw the CA requested to provide the War Office with a list of British men who spoke good Chinese in order to aid the department, as well as offering 'expert opinion upon the constitution of food-parcels' that were to be dispatched to East Asia from Australia.<sup>199</sup> Alongside this the Ministry of Information also appealed to the CA for suggestions regarding sending propaganda to China in 1945.<sup>200</sup>

Overall, these relationships between the CA and departments of the British government seem to have been profitable and often mutually so. Information of a confidential nature was exchanged on a regular basis, and the CA was made privy to items of importance not only as a matter of courtesy, but also to offer feedback to the departments. Such developments as these show how such a relationship between a voluntary association and a governmental department could develop, with the Association offering input and feedback through its role as an insider interest group.<sup>201</sup> This was one of the primary day to day functions of the CA, commenting on commercial minutiae to relevant government departments in order to make the voice of commerce heard. Whilst this may not have amounted to shaping the overarching direction of British policy in East Asia it offered the CA a voice which could seek to advise the British government and with which it might seek to gain concessions. At a more foundational level this illustrates how profoundly voluntary associations could intersect with, and potentially influence, civic and political life—and in doing so see the CA fulfil the role of a political pressure—or interest—group, whilst also maintaining a host of other functions.

Alongside these collective relationships the CA held, it is also important to note that, primarily as a result of their long careers in China—and in some cases in the employment of the British government—individual members also had connections which could be of benefit to the CA as a whole. Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, for example, retained strong enough links from his career as a colonial administrator to be able to

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<sup>198</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 13 June 1916, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>199</sup> Annual report for 1941-42, pp.2-3, available at Annual Reports, 1935-42, CHAS/A/10.

<sup>200</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 3 October 1945, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937 - December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943 - December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8.

<sup>201</sup> Watts, *Pressure Groups*, pp.2-6.

inform the CA committee, confidentially, of the position of the Foreign Office, Colonial Office, and Admiralty regarding the return of Wei-hai-wei to China, and, as noted above, of pending Naval appointments to the China station.<sup>202</sup> Similarly, later president Sir John Jordan retained a number of links from his career as a diplomat to prominent Chinese figures with whom he regularly met.<sup>203</sup> And strikingly, the 1906 dinner to Duke Tsai Tze saw Lord Fitzmaurice, the Parliamentary Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, inform the assembled guests that much that he knew of China had been learned from the chairman of the CA, a result of the two having lived in the same town and occasionally journeying together to London.<sup>204</sup>

The value of these personal connections and networks the CA had access to and could draw upon was on display during the renegotiation of British commercial treaties with China in the wake of the Boxer uprising. The renegotiation was to be handled by three men, two of whom were connected to the CA.<sup>205</sup> The lead negotiator, Sir James Mackay, had long been a friend of prominent founding CA member Sir Thomas Sutherland.<sup>206</sup> Meanwhile, assisting Mackay was Charles Dudgeon, former chairman of the CA's Shanghai Branch, who later served for a number of years on the general committee in London, including two years as chairman.<sup>207</sup> Notwithstanding Dudgeon's later disagreements with the CA's London committee, discussed in chapter two, by a combination of personal links and the prominence of their members in East Asia the CA was able to have men it knew well at this critical negotiation—a fact that made Sir Thomas Sutherland—though deeply unhappy about the Boxer uprising itself—cautiously optimistic for the future of British trade in China.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 21 December 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3. Cecil C. Smith had a long career in the Colonial Service. He was an 'accomplished Chinese scholar' who served in Hongkong, Ceylon and Singapore, rising to be Governor of the latter. See C.M. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, pp.102-3.

<sup>203</sup> Annual report for 1924-25, appendix, pp.18-25, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08.

<sup>204</sup> Interim Annual report for 1906, p.134, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>205</sup> John King Fairbank, Katherine Frost Bruner and Elizabeth Macleod Matheson (eds.), *The I.G. in Peking: Letters of Robert Hart, Chinese Maritime Customs, 1868-1907, vol. II* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p.1285.

<sup>206</sup> Annual Dinner, 11 November 1901, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

<sup>207</sup> C.J. Dudgeon served as chairman of the Shanghai branch of the China Association in 1897, 1898 and 1901. He became a member of the London committee in 1907, before taking up the post of chairman in 1908 and 1909. All information drawn from the respective annual reports, p.1, available at Annual Reports, 1889-98, CHAS/A/01; Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03; Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.

<sup>208</sup> Annual Dinner, 11 November 1901, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

While the types of connections we have now examined—both formal and personal, public and more private—were traceably utilised and useful, others, although available, were less regularly employed or even consciously avoided. This includes three in particular, namely (1) efforts made to gain representation in the House of Commons; (2) efforts made to build links to political parties and; (3) efforts made to educate the wider electorate

From its inception, the CA attempted to maintain some representation in the House of Commons, either through members of the Association—with notable longstanding members including William Keswick, Thomas Sutherland, E.A. Sassoon, Gershom Stewart and H.W. Looker taking positions as MPs themselves—or through maintaining a relationship with an outside MP such as R.A. Yerburch.<sup>209</sup> Compared to earlier efforts such as those of returnees linked to the East India Company, this was, however, a limited effort. At no point were more than three active members of the CA MP's themselves, and the years 1924 and 1929 to 1955 saw the CA with no direct link in the Commons.<sup>210</sup> While the establishment of a China Bloc in the Commons was celebrated in 1898, links with the body were not actively sought. A dinner proposed to be held purely to invite the Bloc as official guests was rejected in the same year.<sup>211</sup> After 1929 the Association was dependent on MP John Wardlaw-Milne as a contact, and any possible later connections to MPs after he lost his seat in 1945 were not recorded.<sup>212</sup> Still, by maintaining some links the CA retained the ability to have questions asked in the House, if they felt it necessary. More often than not, however, they believed they would be better served not asking questions except as a last resort. Having placed so much effort into building a friendly relationship with government departments, they seem to have had little desire to publicly embarrass them by questioning their decisions in the Commons.

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<sup>209</sup> This information is drawn from the annual reports of the China Association and Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2, which cover the period in which R.A. Yerburch was the CA's parliamentary contact.

<sup>210</sup> Information drawn from annual reports for 1924-1929, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08 and Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

<sup>211</sup> Annual General Meeting, 23 March 1898, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>212</sup> For the Decision of the China Association to ask Wardlaw-Milne see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 7 August 1929, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6. It was noted at the 1933 annual dinner that Wardlaw-Milne had in fact agreed to represent the China Association, and asked questions for them in Parliament. See the annual report for 1933-4, appendix p.25, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

A later movement saw the CA aim to forge relations with wider political parties. This began in 1946, with a luncheon at Chatham house between CA and Labour Party representatives followed by the CA secretary forwarding copies of CA bulletins to the Parliamentary Labour Party, for distribution amongst members interested in East Asia.<sup>213</sup> By 1947 this relationship had been formalised, with the creation of a Far Eastern group in the Labour Party, who met with representatives of the CA.<sup>214</sup> This is a clear indication of how the changing nature of the China trade forced the CA to evolve in order to retain connections which might lend influence. With the establishment of the PRC government in October 1949, the Foreign Office could do little. Links to the British labour party may have been seen as a potentially profitable new channel to exploit in Sino-British relations, even though such connections are typically regarded as unprofitable for pressure groups as they align the association with a single side of the political spectrum. Indeed, this seems to have been the case and in 1954, amidst the ‘Golden Years’ of the relationship between the British left and the PRC, the CA were in a position to entertain Mr. Attlee and Mr. Burke of the Labour Party to a luncheon to put forward their views on the current state of British trade with China and their opinions on how it might move forward.<sup>215</sup> This meeting occurred shortly before Attlee, Burke and a delegation from the Labour party travelled to China at the invitation of Premier Zhou Enlai to visit the PRC, to see behind what has been called the ‘bamboo curtain.’<sup>216</sup> There were limits to the links between the CA and the British left, however, and in 1954 the CA would also support the foundation of the official Sino-British Trade Council, rather than pursue links with the communist leaning British Council for the Promotion of International Trade.<sup>217</sup>

Furthermore, the CA were aware that before the House of Commons could prove a useful tool to alter British policy in China, the electorate as a whole would have to be educated as to the current situation in East Asia, allowing British actions in

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<sup>213</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee, 20 August 1946, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1946, CHAS/MCP/46.

<sup>214</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee, 16 July 1947, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1947, CHAS/MCP/47.

<sup>215</sup> Circular to members of the Executive Committee, 30 July 1954, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1954, CHAS/MCP/50D, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London. For further information on the links between the British left and China in this period see Tom Buchanan, *East Wind: China and the British Left, 1925-1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), specifically chapter five.

<sup>216</sup> Patrick Wright, *Passport to Peking: A Very British Mission to Mao's China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp.109-111; Buchanan, *East Wind* pp. 149-153.

<sup>217</sup> Buchanan, *East Wind* pp. 156-158.



China to take a much more prominent position in the national interest.<sup>218</sup> Although attempting to do this was considered on a number of occasions—most notably, as already discussed, when the Shanghai branch threatened revolt in 1905—it was one which attracted little attention from the CA. In 1899, a lecturing tour was rejected as financially impractical and beyond the scope of the Association, but also undesirable as they did not wish, again, to contradict the British government in public.<sup>219</sup> Moreover, in 1913, the decision was taken not to produce a journal together with the American Asiatic Association.<sup>220</sup> Such a move was seen as problematic because it would likely have been limited in its readership, serving primarily to inform their own wider membership of their activities, as opposed to the wider public.<sup>221</sup> The suggestion to do so seems to have, however, piqued the interest of the committee, and the Association did make a small effort inspired by this, with a circular published monthly in the *London and China Telegraph* outlining the recent efforts of the CA committee.<sup>222</sup> The employment of E.M. Gull in 1925 as secretary has been suggested as a turning point for the CA in seeking greater publicity, but any change seems to have been minimal.<sup>223</sup> An appeal for funding in 1927 from a Captain Pogson, who was intending to showcase a series of films in London espousing the benefits of the British presence in Chinese treaty ports, was rejected, and as noted below by 1932 the CA still prized its relationship with the Foreign Office over ‘publicity campaigns’.<sup>224</sup>

It is, of course, possible, and worthy of consideration here that the CA did not seek to educate the general public because they believed that other bodies were already undertaking such work. The CA was certainly grateful when the China League offered to promote the CA’s goals during a lecturing tour in Lancashire in 1900.<sup>225</sup> In 1907

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<sup>218</sup> This was visible to contemporaries of the CA, as well as the CA itself. T.W. Overlach, for example, in his 1919 work *Foreign Financial Control in China* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1919) quoted in Pelcovits, *Old China Hands* p.viii noted that ‘While British Foreign Policy is usually largely directed by public opinion, the constant absence of any public opinion regarding China, based on a lack of interest in this remote country, has caused the policy of the Foreign Office to be guided by the advice of the individuals and firms most prominently associated with China.’

<sup>219</sup> Annual General Meeting, 5 April 1899, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>220</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 15 July 1913, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 August 1913, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>223</sup> Phoebe Chow, *British Opinion and Policy towards China, 1922-1927*, pp.131-2.

<sup>224</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 18 May 1927, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>225</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 September 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

the China Society, too, was founded in London ‘to acquire and diffuse a better knowledge of the Chinese people, their ancient and pacific civilization, their history and folklore, and their social and economic conditions, past and present.’<sup>226</sup> Some crossover was certainly evident in the membership of the groups, although the names noted as the founders of the China Society, which include Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, Sir John Jordan, George Jamieson, Walter Hillier and Byron Brenan who are all mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, are all those of men with a background in the service of the British government in China. Merchants, it seems, had little interest in the body, indicative, likely, of the earlier noted conscious efforts of much of the British population in China before 1925 to remain as distant as possible from Chinese culture in order to reinforce ideas of racial separation and superiority.<sup>227</sup> As of 1913 the China Society was gathering monthly to host lectures in London, and continued to do so for a substantial period of time.<sup>228</sup> An exhibition of modern Chinese painting, held jointly ‘under the auspices of the China Association and the China Society’, is one of the few examples of the CA ever moving into this sphere and lending its backing, and making an attempt to increase public awareness of China.<sup>229</sup> An event of considerable size, it showcased some 230 paintings, with the catalogue containing prefaces by Chinese ambassador Guo Taiqi, as well as Liu Haisu and British Chinese art expert Laurence Binyon, and paved the way for an even larger and highly renowned exhibition of Chinese art later in the year.<sup>230</sup> By 1947, however, the society was experiencing financial difficulties, and the CA secretary wrote to the committee suggesting the CA support the body in some way, potentially allowing the society to use the CA offices as a base of operations.<sup>231</sup> This seems not to have occurred, but the following year the CA did offer support by attempting to make its members aware of, and encouraging their subscription to, the society.<sup>232</sup> Although none of this evidence is conclusive in

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<sup>226</sup> J.C.F., ‘The China Society’, p.226.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> “The China Society” *The Straits Times* (Singapore) 13 February 1913.

<sup>229</sup> “Concerts & C..” *Times* (London, England), 12 March. 1935, p.14.

<sup>230</sup> Michaela Pejcochova, ‘Exhibitions of Chinese painting in Europe in the interwar period: The Role of Liu Haisu as Artistic Ambassador’ in Michelle Huang, Ed., *The Reception of Chinese Art Across Cultures* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), p.189. For details of the larger exhibition which followed see Jason Steuber, ‘The exhibition of Chinese art at Burlington House, London, 1935-36’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 148 (2006), pp.528-36.

<sup>231</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 9 June 1947, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1947, CHAS/MCP/47.

<sup>232</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 23 September 1948, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1948, CHAS/MCP/48, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

proving the CA avoided such educational roles for this reason, it certainly seems the CA was at least happy to have other bodies undertaking work linked to China in the wider Associational scene, although these were few and far between. Ultimately, however, The CA concluded repeatedly that the British public cared little for the situation in China. Combined with their stance of not contradicting the British government in public, the CA thus consciously decided, early in its existence, that educating the wider electorate was not within its remit. This, too, may have contributed to merchants showing little interest in the China Society.

It was also due to this reluctance to contradict the British government in public that the CA made little use of newspapers as an outlet for their views, except, as we shall see, as a last resort. This was despite the fact that the CA's views could gain substantial traction in the press. When correspondence between the CA and the Foreign Office regarding the proposed 1894 treaty with Japan was made available for publication it was discussed in *The Leeds Mercury*, *Morning Post*, *Standard*, *Dundee Courier* and *Cheshire Observer*.<sup>233</sup> Conscious of the value of their links to government departments, however, the CA were as likely to support the British government publically as criticise it, telegraphing Reuters, for example, to espouse their view in 1898 that

The China Association are fully conscious of the grave state of affairs in the far East, but they have no doubt her Majesty's Government are quite alive to the magnitude of the British interests in China, both commercial and political, and they have every confidence that those interests will be protected.

The telegram received a fair amount of publicity, and was reprinted or mentioned in the *Glasgow Herald*, *Freeman's Journal*, *Morning Post* and *Standard*.<sup>234</sup>

Overall, the CA remained throughout the period under study of the opinion expressed by Cecil Clementi Smith in 1905 that 'as long as Government is conducted in the form in which it is in the present time, more is to be got by friendly relations

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<sup>233</sup> "The New Treaty With Japan" *Leeds Mercury* (Leeds, England), 30 August 1894. "The New Treaty With Japan" *Morning Post* (London, England), 30 August 1894. "The New Treaty With Japan" *Standard* (London, England), 30 August 1894. "The New Treaty With Japan" *Dundee Courier* (Dundee, Scotland), 12 September 1894. "Literary Extracts" *Cheshire Observer* (Chester, England), 10 September 1894.

<sup>234</sup> "China" *Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), 1 January 1898. "The Chinese Difficulty" *Freeman's Journal* (Dublin, Ireland), 1 January 1898. "Multiple News Items" *Morning Post* (London, England), 1 January 1898. "The Powers and China" *Standard* (London, England), 1 January 1898.

with the Foreign Office than by attacking it in the public press.<sup>235</sup> Such a view continued, certainly, until at least 1932 when chairman S.F. Mayers reminded the committee that publicity was not an option due to ‘the difficulty of reconciling publicity campaigns with the close relations which had existed with the Foreign Office for many years. As things were, the Association was always able to consult with the Foreign Office at any time and to be informed of its views.’<sup>236</sup>

Indicative of these approaches of the Association is their response to a single event of importance—the Boxer Uprising. As the situation developed the CA were unhappy with the actions and responses of the British government. As such they first sought to offer advice in private, for example that Viceroy in the Yangtze region should be given British government backing to defeat the Boxers, and protected from the reprisals of Peking should they do so. When the Foreign Office disagreed, the CA’s committee permitted R.A. Yerburch to raise the matter in Parliament. When the Shanghai branch informed London that the conflict had become a civil war this was also communicated to the Foreign Office privately, with the CA choosing not to raise the matter in Parliament at all. Finally, the CA committee were deeply unenthusiastic about the appointment of Ernest Satow as British Minister in Peking at such a delicate time, with the chairman referring to Satow as ‘clever as a literary man and student; but in his official capacity... worse than useless.’ Secretary R.S. Gundry had attempted to place a paragraph to espouse this view in *The Times* (though this was rejected by the editor) but that seems to have been an individual decision. Collectively, the committee had decided that the press should only be used as a ‘last resort’ and instead the Chairman called on Sir Thomas Sanderson at the Foreign Office (with the CA’s usual Foreign Office contact F.L. Bertie on holiday) to put forward the CA’s views.<sup>237</sup> Even when unhappy with the conduct of the British government during a major crisis, the CA were unwilling to air their views in public, preferring instead a policy of negotiation and discussion with the relevant British government departments.

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<sup>235</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 July 1905, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

<sup>236</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 16 June 1932, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>237</sup> These series of issues were raised at a series of Meetings of the General Committee, dated 28 June, 24 July, 2 August, 14 August, 12 September and 27 September 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

### **Directing political pressure: Metropole or periphery pulls?**

Although these examples document how the CA operated as a political pressure group, they do not reveal, beyond small glimpses, the direction of the policy the CA wished to pursue and from where in the Association the motivations to act originated. Notably, they leave us unaware of who was directing the CA, be this individuals, firms, or a collection of interests, something that must be known to understand the Association in the frame of a political pressure, or interest, group. To establish that we must instead focus on a series of short case studies highlighting the CA's responses to a series of major questions and aims which appear prominently throughout the Association's records. These records are often extensive: the annual report for 1909, for example, contains a 41-page summary of issues, plus a further 177 pages of correspondence and other supplements, making reference to some 22 matters related to China and East Asia. Of these 22 matters the CA actively pursued 15. Precluded from undertaking a complete appraisal here by constraints of the thesis, three key representative examples are selected here to serve as case studies. These are examples reflecting CA interests that drew the focus of the Association for substantial periods of time, and received much of its attention. One—opium trading, and its decline—related to expatriate business interests; another example—the development of Shanghai—was primarily a settler aim, and offers insight into how settler and expatriate concerns could align and the relative levels of influence these groups held in the CA; the final example—extraterritoriality and its retention or surrender—affected both settler and expatriate interests and shows how the CA moved from a defensive position to one in line with British government efforts for progressive negotiation after 1925 to see extraterritoriality surrendered in due course. Let us consider the examples in turn.

#### *The China Association and the opium trade*

The first of these examples, the opium trade, was one in which the CA were, for much of their life, defined by their inactivity rather than their activity. The trade was, by its nature, one in which expatriate and multinational firms were concerned, shipping the drug from India to Shanghai. Yet while the main shippers of the drug—Sassoons—were by this point a true multinational, headquartered in London with outposts throughout East Asia, they were not as influential as other CA backers whom we have

already discussed, such as the HSBC, Jardine Matheson, or Swires.<sup>238</sup> Opium, then, provides a key window through which we can view the true hierarchy of power within the CA amongst expatriate firms. Opium also raised questions for the CA over how far it could, or should, become involved in a controversial moral question, and how best to protect the Association's image while still supporting the needs of its members.

British trade in China had been founded on the importation of opium, beginning with the First Opium War (1839-42), with the importation of the drug peaking the 1880s.<sup>239</sup> Around this time cheaper Chinese grown opium had supplanted British and American imports, and by the time of the CA's involvement the trade was in a state of further reduction given British agreements to reduce import levels as long as China halted home-grown production in effect.<sup>240</sup> As such its current importance to many CA firms was not large. Some major CA backers such as the HSBC and Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China continued to hold an interest, lending to merchants to trade in opium, but as we shall see were happy to see the trade reduced as long as prices remained consistent. The P&O line, once major shippers of the drug, had diversified its interests by this time and did not mourn the demise of the trade, shipping only a small amount of opium by 1900.<sup>241</sup> Other key backers such as Jardine Matheson had long since moved away from the opium trade, preferring to deal in less controversial business sectors.<sup>242</sup> As such, much of the complaint over the matter came from CA member firm David Sassoon. Sassoon had been a late entrant to the trade, but by offering production credits to growers had come to dominate.<sup>243</sup> Despite the Sassoon's personal contacts (three family members were friends of King Edward VII) they also sought the help of the CA to argue for continuation of the trade.<sup>244</sup> Yet they were a firm who held minor influence within the Association. Although they offered funding consistently, this was nowhere near the levels of those who wished the CA to

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<sup>238</sup> For a brief overview of Sassoons business interests in this period see Wright (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China*, p.224.

<sup>239</sup> Alfred W. McCoy 'The Stimulus of Prohibition: A Critical History of the Global Narcotics Trade' in Michael K. Steinberg, Joseph J. Hobbs and Kent Mathewson (eds.), *Dangerous Harvest: Drug Plants and the Transformation of Indigenous Landscapes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp.36-7.

<sup>240</sup> Harcourt, 'Black Gold: P&O and the Opium Trade, 1847-1914', pp.76-83. In 1912 R.S. Gundry wrote a lengthy memorandum which also covers the subject, see the annual report for 1912, appendix pp.79-95, available at Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06.

<sup>241</sup> Harcourt, 'Black Gold: P&O and the Opium Trade, 1847-1914', p.83.

<sup>242</sup> Jardine Matheson ended its involvement in the trade of opium in 1871, see Ward Fay 'The Opening of China', p.79.

<sup>243</sup> Connel, *A Business in Risk*, pp.3-4.

<sup>244</sup> Maisie Meyer 'Baghdadi Jewish Merchants in Shanghai and the Opium Trade' *Jewish Culture and History*, 2, 1, (1999), p.62.

remain outside of the opium question. This saw the CA take a stance of supporting controlled reduction in the trade, in line with international agreements made in 1907 to see the trade ended in 10 years, provided this was done with commitment and fairness by all those involved.<sup>245</sup> Alongside this, the CA were keen to avoid engaging in moral questions regarding opium, and unwilling to risk damaging their reputation and image.

An early involvement in 1902 is symptomatic of the CA's attempts to remain aloof from this ongoing debate about the morality of the drug.<sup>246</sup> When the Hongkong committee telegraphed London to protest against a newly imposed tax on opium, the London committee simply forwarded their complaints to the Foreign Office, making no comment themselves.<sup>247</sup> It was not until 1907 that the London committee outlined their own position on the matter. In reaction to efforts by the Viceroy of Nanking attempting to create a monopoly of the trade, excluding foreign interests, the CA in London sent a memorandum to the Foreign Office outlining its opposition.<sup>248</sup> The CA stressed, however, that their opposition was in response to the breaking of treaties, rather than any tacit support of the opium trade, insisting that they remained above the 'controversial' moral aspect. Indeed, so cautious were the CA of avoiding a debate over morals that when a letter on the opium question was published by the China Missions Emergency Committee to which the CA took exception—believing it reflected badly on the image of the China trade as a whole—they refrained from complaint for fear that a 'reply might invite rejoinder and controversy of the kind was quite useless.'<sup>249</sup>

Indeed, the annual reports for the following years continue to present a picture of a restraint. The CA repeatedly outlined their support for agreements to see the India-China opium trade slowly and consistently reduced. Although they still felt the need to become involved at what they perceived as Chinese transgressions by 1910, the CA

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> 'Anti-opiumists' had forced a Royal Commission into Opium, partially due to their moral objections, as early as 1895, but this ultimately had little effect. See R.K. Newman 'India and the Anglo-Chinese Opium Agreements, 1907-14' *Modern Asian Studies*, 23, 3 (1989), p.529.

<sup>247</sup> See the annual report for 1902-03, correspondence p.12, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03.

<sup>248</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 30 July 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4. See also the annual report for 1907-08, appendix pp.1-11, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>249</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 11 December 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

was of the view that the issue had much improved.<sup>250</sup> The CA were confident from that reports from trusted British officials that Chinese cultivation of opium was decreasing, in line with imports, and saw this as a fair reduction and a commendable effort to end opium usage by all interested parties, an outcome they saw as important despite the damage this would cause to David Sassoon.

In 1912, however, the CA's position took a rapid turn. The new republican government of China took a more coercive approach to removing opium from China. Addicts were executed, owners of opium dens were beaten, and entire villages that refused to stop growing the drug were burned to the ground.<sup>251</sup> More importantly from an economic perspective, the new government seized opium stocks before they could be sold. This broke agreements to see opium imports slowly phased out, and attracted a great deal of CA attention. They complained to the Foreign Office, arguing that the Chinese 'motive is to secure a monopoly of supply to the native grower and a monopoly of taxation to themselves' and suggested various solutions. The opium question took up 64 pages of the Association's annual report appendix this year, comprising various correspondence between committees, firms and the Foreign Office, summaries of the 'situation in the provinces', and even a reproduction of the articles that relating to opium in the new penal code. A reproduction of a memorandum by R.S. Gundry—although made in his own name, rather than that of the CA—filled considerable space, and even dared defend the morality of the trade, insisting 'self-righteous' critics were unaware that 'the poppy was, as a matter of fact, grown in China a thousand years ago', had been used for medicinal purposes for some time, and that, anyway, 'Opium-smoking seems to have been introduced by way of Formosa, during the Dutch occupation of that island' almost as though this removed any British guilt in the matter.<sup>252</sup>

In searching for the reason for the sudden change in the CA's stance, one motive stands out: with the republican government stopping sales of opium entirely, stocks would increase rapidly unless production was similarly reduced. When a CA

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<sup>250</sup> 1910, for example, saw a great deal of communication with the Foreign Office when China violated previous agreements regarding opium, to the extent that the CA were unable to publish all correspondence due to its sheer volume. See the annual report for 1910-11, pp.xvi-xvii and appendix pp.1-8, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>251</sup> James Windle, 'Harms caused by China's 1906-1917 opium suppression intervention' *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 24 (2013), pp.498-505.

<sup>252</sup> For all of the above see the annual report for 1912-13, appendix pp.32-96, available at Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06.



request to the Foreign Office that the Indian government halt exports was rejected, this became inevitable. With stocks building to such high levels, opium already purchased from India by merchants would be devalued. Not only would this harm merchants, but it would cause a serious loss for the banks who had lent them the capital to purchase the opium originally. Both the HSBC and Chartered Bank—key Association backers—endorsed a complaint to the Foreign Office on this matter, reprinted in the CA's annual report.<sup>253</sup> With large, sudden losses to major CA backers, as opposed to the steady reduction of the trade affecting a minority of CA member firms, the CA chose to act on a much greater scale. Thankfully for CA interests, 1912 saw the Indian government agree to reduce exports—and indeed the last opium shipped from India to China sailed from Bombay in February 1913.<sup>254</sup> With a similar agreement from merchants not to flood the market once sales restarted, the investment of Far Eastern banks were safe, as British merchants in China slowly disposed of their stocks over the coming years at greatly inflated prices.<sup>255</sup> With this outcome the CA allowed the matter to rest, although they continued to update members on the opium trade until 1923.

It is clear that the CA could easily be mobilised rapidly when the interests of major backers were threatened. This did not extend to smaller members, for whom they would not risk damaging their image, and in these cases they would only act when they were certain that their actions would be seen as a defence of treaties, rather than a moral judgement over the opium trade and its continuation.

### *The China Association and Shanghai*

While concerns such as those discussed above provided key contexts to the activities of the CA because they affected their corporate members, we must also investigate two key occasions in which the interests of big business overlapped with those of other groups—notably, those groups from which the CA's branches would draw their membership. First, this includes efforts relating to the Shanghai International Settlement; and secondly the CA's response to British efforts to normalise relations with China after 1925. Before then, during the CA's early life, settler and expatriate interests in China retained much greater potential to align. With Shanghai an outpost

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Newman 'India and the Anglo-Chinese Opium Agreements, 1907-14', p.556.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., p.556-7.

for expatriate, multinational business, CA involvement with concerns relating to Shanghai is certainly not unexpected. Yet as we have seen by the threatened split in 1905, the Association's London and Shanghai committees were certainly formed by two distinct types of British migrants in China. Their competing interests saw a complex relationship develop between the CA in London and Shanghai.

Some of the earliest CA involvement with Shanghai has already been discussed, in their protest at the combination of the posts of chief judge and consul general. 1896, also saw them urge upon new minister to China Claude Macdonald the need for extension to the Shanghai International Settlement, a representation made briefly in person before his departure.<sup>256</sup> When both settler and expatriate interests were threatened by the Boxer uprising, the CA urged HM government to protect Shanghai, 'the metropolis of foreign interests and the representative of foreign prestige.'<sup>257</sup> 1903 also saw the CA congratulate the SMC in the annual report for maintaining the right to try 'native residents' first at the mixed court.<sup>258</sup> While supportive of Shanghai, however, these efforts did not greatly extend beyond pressing for the defence of the city and maintenance of the situation already extant.

Of greater interest are the moves the CA made after 1905. As a result of the threatened split by the Shanghai branch, the chairmanship of the CA was handed to a series of representatives of the Shanghai firm Ilbert & Co. As noted in chapter two, they felt they could not achieve all of their goals, restricted as they were by the combined force of the HSBC and Jardine Matheson in the CA. Still, the CA's activity for the following years suggests they at least made some headway in supporting their interests and moving the CA to become a group which pushed more aggressively for the extension of Shanghai.

Indeed, the period between 1906 and 1913 saw a marked change not only in the policies the CA pursued, but also the methods used and the tone chosen to refer to Shanghai. In a long letter the CA wrote to the Foreign Office to outline their views on the current status on the settlement;

Showing no desire to purify her own corrupt fiscal administration, [China] attempts to meddle with the one efficiently managed department in the Empire... Having neglected, during fifty years, to emulate the sanitary and police arrangements of the Foreign Settlement at Shanghai; neglecting still to give proof, by the simplest object lesson, of capacity for judicial and

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<sup>256</sup> Annual report for 1896-7, p.x, available at Annual Reports, 1889-98, CHAS/A/01.

<sup>257</sup> Annual report for 1900-1, p.xiii, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03.

<sup>258</sup> Annual report for 1903-4, p.vii, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03.

municipal reform; failing to control the criminal classes who, attracted by the wealth and prosperity of Shanghai, cluster in the adjacent area under native jurisdiction...her [China's] officials intrigue, jealously, against the superior administration which foreigners have created ...<sup>259</sup>

In response to these perceived failings, the CA became heavily involved in efforts for the expansion of the international settlement.

In an attempt to gain British government backing the CA first focused on representing to the Foreign Office the current problems they saw with Chinese administration of neighbouring districts. In addition to those mentioned above, the CA noted clashes between Chinese and Municipal Police due to disputes over the boundaries of their jurisdiction and stressed that Chapei, an area they wished to see incorporated into the international settlement, was 'largely inhabited by the lowest class of native, whose beggar hovels constitute a menace to the health of the portions of the settlements adjoining.' Another district was described to the Foreign Office as 'the rendezvous of lawless characters—river thieves, salt smugglers, loafers, ruffians and pirates, whose crimes, including several murders, fill a large space in the municipal records; it is absolutely essential for the peace of the Settlements that the lawlessness of this district be suppressed.' The only way to do this, the CA insisted, was to extend the International Settlement to their proposed new boundary—that of an already extant railway line. After consideration the Foreign Office informed the CA that 'His Majesty's Minister at Peking ... addressed a Note to the Wai-wu-pu [the department of foreign affairs, or Zongli Yamen] asking for an extension up to the Shanghai-Nanking railway Line of the Shanghai International Settlement, on account of the insanitary condition of the Chinese suburb which now occupies that area.' Despite persuading the Foreign Office to align with their view, however, little progress was made, nor could it be made, without the agreement of the Chinese government.<sup>260</sup>

By 1910, the CA began to present new arguments. They informed the Foreign Office that the Chinese administration was now actively organising to obstruct the works of gas and water companies.<sup>261</sup> Alongside this, they complained about the insanitary conditions of Chapei spreading, and with this the number of plague infested rats increasing. The Foreign Office agreed that these arguments were 'more cogent'

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<sup>259</sup> Interim Annual report for 1906, p.111, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>260</sup> Annual report for 1908, appendix pp.92-3, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>261</sup> Annual report for 1910, appendix pp.27-33, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

than before, and so chose to seek American co-operation to try and expedite the expansion. Ultimately, this too failed.<sup>262</sup>

The next CA steps saw the Shanghai branch approach American and German associations in order to seek and establish co-operation to achieve progress; this was done with the full backing of the London Committee. The CA representative in the House of Commons, Gershom Stewart, also asked a question in Parliament on the matter, a tactic that, as we have seen, was rarely used by the CA. Other moves, also out of character with, and more aggressive than the pre-1905 CA, saw a suggestion that Britain refuse to recognise the new Chinese Republic until an extension was agreed, and to simply retain control of Chapei after it had been occupied by a naval contingent deployed to protect Shanghai in 1913.<sup>263</sup> Both were rejected by the Foreign Office. It took until 1915 before the CA could report success, with an agreement reached for the extension of the international settlement, on what the CA had to admit was ‘a liberal scale.’<sup>264</sup>

In this period, before attempts were made to normalise Sino-British relations, the CA could pursue aggressive goals that harmed China’s sovereignty. Furthermore, it shows the CA were not acting purely in the interests of the metropole who were only interested in railway development, mining, and later, financial loans to China. They were acting to protect and enhance settler interests at the request of their Shanghai branch, and, importantly for our understanding of the Association, doing so most energetically in a short period after 1905 when control of the Association’s chairmanship was passed to representatives of a Shanghai, rather than a multinational, firm. For a period, at least, the CA was representative to some extents of all British China interests, and with this took a much more proactive stance, embracing wider methods and less reliant on co-operation with the Foreign Office. This, however, was not something that could continue. Although they would oppose the increase of Chinese representation on the SMC after World War One, this was a minor aim, and ended in 1932—some four years after the SMC agreed to the election of its first Chinese councillors.<sup>265</sup> Why this was so is made clear by the next case study, which explores and documents the Association’s aims changing to mirror the wider British

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<sup>262</sup> Annual report for 1910-11, appendix pp.27-33, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>263</sup> Annual report for 1913-4, appendix p.50, Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06.

<sup>264</sup> Annual report for 1914-5, p.xiv-xv, Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06.

<sup>265</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, p.76

policy of normalisation of Sino-British relations after 1925, as well as a return to co-operation with the Foreign Office and the British government.

*The China Association and extraterritoriality*

Indeed, in assessing who held control within the CA there is one key example that cannot be ignored—the proposed changes to the system of extraterritoriality under which British subjects in China lived. This system ensured that British subjects were not under control of Chinese law, and instead under British jurisdiction. This was one of the key pillars upon which the British settler presence and ‘informal empire’ rested in China.<sup>266</sup> Reform of this system was to be led by co-operation between the British government and specifically chosen major firms and interests, including key CA members Swires and Jardine Matheson—we have already seen how the CA took the opportunity at social functions to express their support for such changes.<sup>267</sup> The wider reaction of the CA to such plans is critical to understanding who was shaping the CA’s goals and direction, as well as informing us of how the British business community in London co-operated with the government’s aims.

This reconfiguration of the British presence, and British interests, in China began following the events of 1925, when the impetus for reform was accelerated as a result of the May Thirtieth Movement. Before this, at the time of the Washington Conference of 1921, which ultimately recommended the system of extraterritoriality be re-examined, the CA in both Shanghai and London believed the system should remain in place, with their views being ‘fully expressed to the Foreign Office.’<sup>268</sup> Over the course of the following years a similar view prevailed, with the current situation in China noted repeatedly as their reason for opposing negotiations on the matter. In a meeting at the Board of Trade, for example, in 1926, W.B. Kennet and Stanley H. Dodwell gave evidence on behalf of the CA, and lamented, amongst other problems ‘illegal tolls extracted by the military, who were little better than brigands.’<sup>269</sup> This stance mirrored, in spirit if not details, the official stance of the British government which acted pragmatically in the period, on one hand returning the concession at

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<sup>266</sup> Osterhammel, ‘Britain in China’, p.153.

<sup>267</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.162-3.

<sup>268</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 11 October 1924, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>269</sup> “Chinese Questions: China Association’s View.” *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester, England), 05 February 1926.

Hankow—to the CA’s dismay—whilst also dispatching troops to China in the form of the Shanghai Defence Force and ensuring extraterritoriality would continue for larger enclaves such as Shanghai for the time being.<sup>270</sup> More extreme voices who advocated a radical change to British policy, such as G.W. Swire, would have to wait to alter the CA’s view, although a slight alteration is perhaps evident in the response of the CA to a speech by Sir Frederick Whyte in 1928 when they agreed that China must be supported in its efforts to create a strong government.<sup>271</sup>

For the CA, then, their stance on extraterritoriality did not alter immediately with the events of 30 May 1925, instead it took a more directly threatening event to trigger change. This came nearly five years later, when the CA were shocked—as were the British, French and American governments—to learn of a Chinese national government mandate proposing to abolish it immediately, on 1 January 1930, although the chosen date would pass without any action taken to back the announcement.<sup>272</sup> A joint committee of CA and China Committee members was formed, and met on 4 December 1929.<sup>273</sup> It was agreed that it was, still, ‘impossible, at this juncture’ that extraterritoriality might be surrendered. A subtle change in the CA’s view was, however, apparent with the Association now ‘satisfied that when China’s laws were completed they would, as laws, be suitable for foreigners.’ A number of interim solutions were considered by the CA and China Committee, who decided to back a scheme that would have seen international courts appointed by The Hague try foreigners instead of allowing this to happen in Chinese courts.<sup>274</sup> This response was outlined in a report forwarded to the Foreign Office and was followed by a meeting between the combined committee and Foreign Office representatives in December of 1929.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Fung, ‘The Sino-British Rapprochement’; Annual report for 1927-8, pp.iii-xxiii, available at Annual Reports, 1924-28, CHAS/A/08.

<sup>271</sup> Phoebe Chow, *British Opinion and Policy towards China, 1922-1927*, p.151 and p.233.

<sup>272</sup> Bickers, *Out of China*, p.122.

<sup>273</sup> The China Committee had been founded in 1927, and comprised of representatives of the CA, FBI, eastern section of the London Chamber of Commerce and the Home Shipowners. Swires had hoped it might prove ‘more effective than the China Association’—though in reality due to G.W. Swires views differing from those of the CA at this time, they perhaps in reality meant more pliable. See Phoebe Chow, *British Opinion and Policy towards China, 1922-1927*, pp.149-52.

<sup>274</sup> Minutes of a joint meeting of the China Association and China Committees, 4 December 1929, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>275</sup> Annual report for 1929-30, p.xix, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

Unfortunately, what transpired at the meeting is not recorded. However, by the next AGM in March 1930 it is clear that the events of the previous year had acted as a catalyst to modify the CA's views. The CA reported positively on 'the British government's ideas of a progressive solution' and at the AGM chairman Stanley Dodwell noted that while the issues of extraterritoriality were ones full of 'explosive elements' that conciliation and negotiation were undoubtedly preferable to the state 'Six months ago [when] it looked as though the Chinese were advancing towards them literally with lighted torches in their hands.'<sup>276</sup> Although it had taken something of a shock to see the CA's view realigned, they were no longer averse to negotiation on the matter with the Chinese. For big business interests a rapid upheaval would be damaging. In this manner, they could postpone the inevitable and give themselves time to reposition.<sup>277</sup> The relationship that the CA had spent considerable effort in developing with the Foreign Office even allowed CA firms a slight head start in altering their business methods. A first meeting was called in October 1930 in order to discuss early Foreign Office proposals to modify the system of extraterritoriality which had been 'circulated to them [the CA].' Although it was recognised that the Chinese would likely reject such early suggestions, the CA were nonetheless given an opportunity to comment on how they believed negotiations should develop, and the Foreign Office promised to summon an 'extraterritoriality committee' to discuss any further progress.<sup>278</sup> A telegram from the Shanghai branch—suggesting negotiations be discontinued—was simply passed on to the Foreign Office with no comment from London, who believed that 'the Shanghai community were in ignorance, when they sent the telegram, of the nature of the proposals that were being made.'<sup>279</sup>

By January of 1931 the CA had become aware of Chinese counter proposals over the matter. Worried that they would place British companies under Chinese jurisdiction and that they would, essentially, affect 'all existing arrangements' relating to Shanghai, some panic seems to have ensued at the meeting. H.W. Looker insisted 'that the Association should leave the Foreign Office in no doubt in regard to its view

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<sup>276</sup> Annual report for 1930-31, appendix, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

<sup>277</sup> Indeed, Bickers notes that major firms did so later, in 1937 regarding the status of the Shanghai international settlement, to ensure that they would be well placed when peace came. Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.159.

<sup>278</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 October 1930, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

that the Chinese counter-proposals should not be agreed to.’<sup>280</sup> Sir Harry Fox, however, formerly HM counsellor in Peking, lent his experience of time in government service and provided a moderating voice, ensuring the other committee members that ‘from what he knew of Sir Miles Lampson’, current British minister in China, discussions would continue to be in line with earlier British suggestions, and ‘that it would be a mistake to take the proposals too seriously.’<sup>281</sup> Ultimately a letter was sent outlining the Association’s view that the proposals were of ‘serious import’, but the CA expressing outright rejection was avoided.<sup>282</sup>

With negotiations over a draft treaty regarding extraterritoriality nearing completion the following year, CA chairman S.F. Mayers and president Sir George Macdonogh ‘were invited to an interview with Sir Victor Wellesley, Mr. C.W. Orde and Sir John Pratt’ of the Foreign Office on 1 June where they were given the ‘opportunity of studying [the treaty’s] text.’<sup>283</sup> A meeting ‘of such persons as could be rapidly invited’ was held the following day to gather the views of prominent CA members including Mr. Dodwell (of Dodwell & Co.), Mr Landale (Jardine Matheson) and Sir Newton Stabb (HSBC) who agreed to inform the Foreign Office of their support for the treaty, although they made it clear they ‘could not claim to express to corporate opinion of the CA.’<sup>284</sup> The wider general committee were informed of the ‘provisions of the draft treaty’ at a meeting held on 8 June, and these were placed on file at the CA’s offices for any other members to view.<sup>285</sup>

Granted this privileged position, the CA began to espouse their support for the removal of extraterritoriality and their support for the British government’s position. At the AGM of 1931 a number of comments were made praising the increasing stability of the country. It fell to H.W. Looker to outline the CA’s stance over extraterritoriality. In the face of rising nationalism and the clamour it brought for the removal of extraterritorial rights, he advised members that

When you find these conditions arising, your sanest policy is to endeavour as far as you can to swim with the stream, not against it. In my view the

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<sup>280</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 January 1931, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., Fox had spent 35 years in China, and spoke in London on extraterritoriality, See Sir Harry Fox K.B.E., ‘What the surrender of extra-territoriality will mean to us’, *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, 18, 3 (1931), pp.384-8.

<sup>282</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 January 1931.

<sup>283</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 8 June 1931, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.



policy which Great Britain should adopt under present conditions is to endeavour as far as she can to secure goodwill and respect by meeting as far as possible these desires based on the spirit of nationalism which are being put forward.<sup>286</sup>

Though this was hardly a great endorsement of the proposed changes, it certainly displayed a willingness, and awareness, that resistance was no longer the best option—and it was certainly better than Looker's proposed outright rejection of earlier proposals. China could no longer simply be subjugated by foreign interests, and co-operation and reform were the stance with the CA thought British interests would be best preserved. It was in this spirit, too, that as we have seen, the CA altered their social functions to include Chinese guests.

It is important to note, however, that the CA did not immediately sever all links and efforts to support Shanghai interests. It still maintained a committee in the city, and would represent Shanghai complaints when these were not seen as overzealous. As discussed previously 1933 saw the Association (at the direction of Swires) support the Shanghai branch's claims that the District Court should remain under foreign administration as this was regarded as a matter that would not be inflammatory.<sup>287</sup> Despite this, the CA in London would never again support settler interests in the way it once had. We should, perhaps, not be surprised by this. As prospects for business decrease, as they did in the face of Chinese nationalism, networks often 'turn inwards' and look to become 'shields' for their members, in this case, key London and Hongkong based firms.<sup>288</sup> Excluding settlers was necessary to conform to the will of the British government, and to hope to secure advantages in the future.

Following 1930 A lull in negotiations and changes followed, as wider discussions over the matter of extraterritoriality lapsed.<sup>289</sup> However, when the time came for the final surrender of extraterritorial rights in 1943, the CA were supportive of the move. Sending a letter to *The Times* in late 1942 to show their 'appreciation' of the new realities, they stated their agreement with the views of the papers' Chungking correspondent that all 'business men ask today is not the dubious help of the outworn

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<sup>286</sup> Annual report for 1930-31, appendix, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

<sup>287</sup> E.M. Gull to G.W. Swire, 27 June 1933, Letters from E.M. Gull Secretary, London Director's Political Correspondence, JSS/1/3/14/12, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive.

<sup>288</sup> Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of people, goods and capital in the British World, 1850-1914*, p.238.

<sup>289</sup> The Thorburn Case, when a young Brit was killed by the Chinese military police, a change in government in Britain, and the wider Manchurian Crisis are all noted as reasons for the lull in negotiations, see Bickers, *Out of China*, pp.125-130.

safeguards of the past but the promise of equal treatment in the future.’<sup>290</sup> As noted earlier, this view was similarly made clear to Chinese representatives in person at a 1943 luncheon when the CA Chairman stated any future expatriates dispatched by CA firms would act and live ‘according to the law of China’.<sup>291</sup> The CA, therefore, once again put the needs of expatriate big business first, and fully accepted and aligned itself with the British government’s stance. Key firms within the Association had espoused the value of such changes to the wider membership to ensure Metropole interests presented a coherent voice, and in return the CA was given early insight into private negotiations on the matter, remaining, as an insider interest, a group invited into policy discussion as part of a wider policy community.

## **Conclusion**

We find, then, that the political endeavours of the CA largely conform to—and confirm—what we would have expected from the background already established of their individual and corporate members. Once again, conflict between metropole and periphery surfaced, and, like before, metropole interests remained dominant. Concessions were, again, made to ensure that the Association itself did not fracture, but control always rested, ultimately, with the large multinational firms of the London committee.

Throughout the period under study the CA remained astute in their efforts to ensure the voices of these firms were heard by the British government—even if by the very nature of the methods employed, we are largely precluded from making a judgement on whether they were successful and held any sizeable influence. To create links they operated primarily as an insider interest group. Relationships were forged with permanent British government officials in Whitehall through the exchange of information and correspondence and, potentially, through social functions. These efforts eventually saw the CA given a role to play and co-opted into a wider alliance by the British government when the British presence in China was altered following the events of 1925. Their reluctance to use more public methods of applying pressure

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<sup>290</sup> For the original statement made by the *Times*’ correspondent see “Foreign Interests in China.” *Times* (London, England), 22 October 1942, p.5. For the CA’s support see “Relations with China.” *Times* (London, England), 2 November 1942, p.5. An outline of new regulations replacing extraterritoriality is to be found in the Annual report for 1942-3, pp.4-5, available at Annual Reports, 1942-53, CHAS/A/10A.

<sup>291</sup> Annual report for 1943, pp.11-14, available at Annual Reports, 1942-53, CHAS/A/10A.

was a conscious decision, and, perhaps, combined with the often hidden nature of the methods they did pursue, accounts for their relatively unstudied position in Sino-British history.

Indeed, the closest the CA came to public criticism of the British government was at their social functions. However criticism, even in this relatively closed setting, was rarely harsh. And by the latter half of the period under study, these functions were even actively promoting British government aims through the invitation of Chinese dignitaries, representing the efforts of the British returnee community to build personal relationships with Chinese partners as part of a wider re-organisation of the British presence in China. Official dinners given to prominent individuals further strengthened the political potential of these social occasions, not least, as we have seen, when dining Chinese dignitaries such as Li Hongzhang.

It was somewhat of a paradox, then, that these social functions could not become overly political occasions, for fear of alienating the wider apolitical CA membership, in case this caused a drop in membership which would, in turn, have weakened the CA's political voice. But once again, compromise was evident throughout, as the CA reconciled the needs of two groups of members and the overlapping political and social networks to which they chose to subscribe. The CA's social events continued to provide enjoyable occasions for the wider CA membership, at least some of whom seem to have struggled with a 'difficult return' to Britain, one which we can now see was related to their specific experiences and tied to the image of the British population in Shanghai, and even China as a whole.

The employment of social occasions to impart political pressure and build connections and networks for business purposes, however, remains a key point of importance in the study of the CA. It shows that they were aware that there were more ways to attempt to improve British trade with China than simply petitioning the British government through official channels. This desire to improve trade would also appear prominently in the final object of the CA to be discussed: its desire to provide charity, philanthropy and undertake benevolent acts (and as a development of this, educational schemes) related to China. This is the subject of the final chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### BENEVOLENCE AND PHILANTHROPY

Hungry and homeless, hundreds of thousands of Chinese families have no means of support from day to day. It is estimated that out of 182 millions in the war-affected areas at least 30 millions have fled their homes! The British ambassador in describing the situation says:- "I have myself seen sights which impel me to urge you to continue your efforts unabated... they are in constant need of help which only your fund can give." Please enable this help to be carried on.<sup>1</sup>

This was how a joint CA, Red Cross, and Conference of British Missionary Societies appeal placed in *The Times* in 1938 read. The CA, having enshrined in its fifth object

To establish, undertake, superintend, administer and contribute to any charitable or benevolent fund from whence may be made donations or advances to deserving persons who may be or may have been engaged in the China trade, or connected within any person engaged therein, and to contribute or otherwise assist any charitable or benevolent institution or undertakings<sup>2</sup>

had made clear its intention to play a charitable role alongside its commercial activities, and to enter into, and act within the wider matrix of, charitable organisations that were of such importance during the late Victorian era. But the CA's interpretation as to what fell within charitable pursuits remained broad, also connecting them to trade matters.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the CA was able to pursue a diverse range of philanthropic schemes, the most prominent of which saw the establishment of a Chinese language school in London. Indeed, in combination, charity and education offered the members of the CA a chance to display what has been termed patrician benevolence, and with the wealth they had accumulated attempt to solve problems which were not addressed by the government, or indeed governments, of Britain and China, and the colonial authorities in Hongkong.<sup>4</sup> This included the desire to alleviate the suffering caused by famine and war in China, whilst also supporting a wealth of schemes in Britain, including collections for destitute returnees or long running educational schemes.

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<sup>1</sup> "British Fund For The Relief Of Distress In China" *Times* (London, England) 14 December 1938 p.18.

<sup>2</sup> The China Association (established 1889) Objects, rules and regulations Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Bueltmann and Macraill, 'Globalizing St. George: English associations in the Anglo-World to the 1930s', p.88.

Other factors, too, likely influenced the CA to involve itself in the philanthropic tradition that was long developed in British society. While we have seen that the CA was located at the centre of the British Associational world due to its foundation at the Thatched House Tavern, it is important to note that it also resided at the centre of the British philanthropic world. The location of its earlier offices—on Leadenhall Street, and then Cannon Street—placed it in the heart of the City of London, which as of the late Victorian era could boast the highest concentration of charitable endowments in the whole of Britain.<sup>5</sup> Some of these were long outdated funds, providing for sermons to celebrate the victory against the Spanish Armada, or more bizarrely, a fund ‘to buy faggots for burning heretics.’ But others, notably the £18,500 provided from city endowments for education, were potential influences and guiding examples for the CA’s own schemes.<sup>6</sup> Similar encouragement may well have come from the powerful livery companies of the City. The findings of an 1880s commission saw that they were spending approximately £50,000 on education, to support schools linked to their trades, university exhibitions, and later, technical education.<sup>7</sup> As time progressed the companies even moved to established scholarships and even their own chairs at universities, a feat, as we shall see, that the CA also accomplished, despite the philanthropic efforts of the wider population largely ignoring university education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>8</sup> Turning to the other geographical ‘home’ of the CA, East Asia, we find also that Scottish ethnic associations in the region engaged in a lively manner with charitable and benevolent collections, although there was less requirement for this than in, for example, the United States.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, providing charity was a key aim of many ethnic societies, and although the CA was not an ethnic society per se, it was perhaps the closest thing that existed for returnees who based their own identity on their time spent in China, and were in that sense a distinct group.<sup>10</sup> From its earliest days the British community in China had seen itself as philanthropic, too, establishing hospitals, educational societies, funds for orphans and widows and a seamen’s hospital, all in

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<sup>5</sup> David Owen, *English Philanthropy, 1660-1900* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1964), p.276.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp.276-279.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp.285-7.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.290, p.346 and chapter 13.

<sup>9</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.180.

<sup>10</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, pp.69-85 for an example of this in America amongst scots. For a wider range of British ethnic societies and their experience in Philadelphia see Sullivan ‘That Charity which begins at Home.’

1830's Canton as part of an effort to elevate their status, demonstrate that they were 'cultured people', and characterise themselves as more than simply opium traders.<sup>11</sup> Returnees have also been noted to be charitable, both through institutions and individually. The Canada Club, though largely a dining club, undertook charitable collections and Scottish returnees have been noted as returning temporarily to establish hospitals for soldiers who had sojourned abroad and returned home wounded.<sup>12</sup>

But where do the motivations that can inspire people to give to charity originate? In some cases, donations come from pure altruism.<sup>13</sup> In others, those who donate are seeking prestige, especially when lists of donors are published. Indeed, a study by Harbaugh has shown that when donations are published in bands of value (e.g., £10-£20, £20-£50, £50-£100) the vast majority of donors give the smallest amount possible to place in their chosen band.<sup>14</sup> This must be considered especially in those schemes during which the CA was backed to a large extent by corporate firms. For these, profits rather than conscience may have been a greater consideration—something this chapter will examine—and so we must be cautious when determining their motives. The concept of 'strategic' giving or corporate philanthropy therefore becomes important, in which companies donate to schemes that will ensure a tangible return in the future.

While these explanations offer suggestions as to why the CA would become involved in charitable and benevolent causes, it is also important to stress some of its strengths in this area. First, the CA was a uniquely placed organisational body. It contained members with considerable expertise in China and East Asia, themselves valuable assets for ascertaining if an appeal was worthy of support and would produce tangible benefit, either for those who required support or those who gave. Members based in East Asia could offer up to date knowledge on charitable causes, and offer first hand perspectives on appeals. Similarly, dissemination of appeals could be undertaken on a wide geographical basis due to the scale of the Association. When representing appeals in London, other strengths were evident. The body had sought to

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<sup>11</sup> Chen, *Merchants of War and Peace*, pp.15-16.

<sup>12</sup> Burke, 'Canada in Britain' p.192; Murdoch, 'Children of the Diaspora: the 'homecoming' of the second-generation Scot', p.60.

<sup>13</sup> Kidd, *State, Society and the poor in Nineteenth-century England*, p.69.

<sup>14</sup> William T. Harbaugh 'What do donations buy?; A model of philanthropy based on prestige and warm glow' *Journal of Public Economics*, 67, 2 (1998), pp.269-284.

improve trust between members from its very inception through social functions. By building social capital and networks the CA became a trusted organisation which members could donate to safe in the knowledge the money would be used appropriately for genuine appeals.

Although these factors drew the CA into supporting charity, practical considerations were raised at a meeting held only two months after the Association's foundation, and questions as to how the Association could realistically fund charitable causes were discussed. It was noted that although the Straits Association—a body the CA wished to emulate—had accumulated a 'large charitable fund' this had primarily been established by the acquisition of legacies from members over a lengthy period of time. That similar legacies may, at some point in the future, have been left to the CA was enough to see the committee agree to the retention of the object.<sup>15</sup> However, recognition was also given to the fact that at this early stage in the development of the Association little could realistically be done.<sup>16</sup> To this end, three rules were settled upon, confirming that charity would be dispensed at the 'absolute discretion' of the general committee, that the executive committee would have 'full power' to decide the direction of the Association's charitable efforts, and that 'the objects of the Association's charity may be reduced or added to' at any AGM or special general meeting.<sup>17</sup> Despite holding a keen intention to support charitable causes, and occupying an advantageous position, the CA remained, at this early stage, realistic about their limitations.

### **Individual pleas for assistance**

Before focusing on the large-scale efforts with which the CA were involved, let us first turn to examples of individual requests made to the Association and collections undertaken for individuals. In many cases, these appeals came from those who had seen the sudden upheaval expatriate life could bring. But it is also notable that these individual calls were relatively few in number for much of the period under study.

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<sup>15</sup> This saw the inclusion of a form to bequeath legacies added to the CA's rules and regulations at this date, although there is no record of the CA receiving funds in this manner. See Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee, 25 June 1889, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> The China Association (established 1889) Objects, rules and regulations, Jardine Matheson Archive, Papers of the China Association, MS JM/L6/4.

This is likely attributable to the fact that, as has been argued for Far Eastern St. Andrews Associations, the CA membership was drawn from a relatively wealthy socioeconomic strata who rarely required charitable support.<sup>18</sup> Although smaller undertakings than those discussed later, these individual appeals were important formative experiences that helped to define the response of the CA to later, larger, appeals.

The first charitable request made of the CA came in 1890, when Association member W.S. Young appealed for support on behalf of Mr Brown, a ‘former partner in the old firm of Dent & Co. who had been ruined by unfortunate investments in Ceylon, and was now practically dependent.’<sup>19</sup> The details of the case were further explained to the committee by Association founder, and current treasurer, Sir Alfred Dent. Despite this backing, the plea for assistance failed. Opposed by committee members S. Ezekiel and J.A. Maitland, the appeal was rejected on the grounds that assent in this matter would open the Association to numerous similar calls, which it was unable to meet owing to its currently unsound financial state.<sup>20</sup> Though never officially enshrined in the Association’s rules and objects, from this point on grants to individuals were never made directly with Association funds, other than a single exception of a small sum.<sup>21</sup> As feared, the finances of the Association were not in a fit state to give out charitable grants to individuals.<sup>22</sup> In order to fulfil their aims of benevolence, the CA was forced to find a different approach.

Alternate methods to generate charitable funds were, therefore, required upon the passing, in 1898, of the British administrator Sir Chaloner Alabaster, aged 59, who had been in the diplomatic service since the age of 16 and was a highly active and well-remembered member of the Shanghai community.<sup>23</sup> A collection was undertaken

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<sup>18</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.184.

<sup>19</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 15 April 1890, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> This was given to T.V. Jeffrey, who received the small sum of £5 following his return to Britain during the Sino-Japanese war. See the Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 13 April 1938, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937- December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943- December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8.

<sup>22</sup> This would change when the CA were given a sizeable grant to support returnees in 1946. However, this was not financed directly from their own funds. It is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

<sup>23</sup> Paul French, *The Old Shanghai A-Z*, (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2010), p.72 notes Alabaster’s status within the community. He was the Founder of Shanghai’s ‘Beefsteak Club’, a stalwart of the Shanghai Amateur Dramatic club (under his stage name Mr.—or when required Miss—Chrysolite Gypsum), and regarded as instrumental in seeing Trinity Church turned into a cathedral. Finally, his penchant for smoking two cheroots at once was apparently also well known within the Shanghai community.



to provide for the wife and the children he had left behind, and by forwarding the appeal to the Shanghai branch, the total raised amounted to £486/-/- , of which £15 was spent on a memorial tablet, leaving £119/5/6 to be given to his widow, along with four 'Chinese railway bonds' for the Children.<sup>24</sup> It is a striking example of the small size of the China expatriate community, and the enduring links its members felt to the country, that nine years later one of these children, C. Grenville Alabaster, served for two years as the CA's secretary before leaving to marry and practice at the Bar in Hongkong.<sup>25</sup> Whether the job offer with the CA was made for charitable reasons, it is impossible to speculate. However, what will become apparent is that appealing to the Association's wider membership (of both individuals and firms) would prove a highly successful tactic in later CA appeals, outlining the importance to view the Association not just as a distributor of charitable funds, but as a nexus for charitable appeals.

Later, other methods were employed to help those who had been left in financial difficulties. When the widow of Sir Everard Fraser was left destitute in East Asia, the CA were more than willing to take up her case with the Foreign Office and request she receive either a special pension or payments. Sir Everard had served the British government in China for 42 years and the CA were unhappy that despite this service his widow was left destitute upon his death in 1922, and was forced to recall her two sons from education in Britain to take up posts in East Asia to support themselves.<sup>26</sup> Similar support was forthcoming when the case of Mrs Satchwell Smith was referred by the Shanghai branch to London. In a case which was reported around the globe, Mrs Smith's husband, Dr. Satchwell Smith, had been murdered in Nanking. Having rejected the \$10,000 of compensation which had been offered by the Chinese authorities, looking for a larger payment, Mrs. Satchwell Smith had turned to the CA who agreed to take up the case and pressed the Foreign Office to address the matter

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<sup>24</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 September 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>25</sup> See "Untitled" *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), 20 February 1909, p.35 and 10 April 1909, p.11.

<sup>26</sup> For the actions taken by the CA see Circular no.303, 26 June 1922, Circulars No. 290-307, CHAS/MCP/28 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London. As recorded in a tribute from Shanghai, Sir Everard Fraser had spent 'nearly all of his official life in China, from his arrival in March 1880 until his death in March 1922. See "Shanghai's Tribute to Sir E. Fraser." *Times* (London, England) 25 March 1922 p.8.

officially with the Chinese authorities.<sup>27</sup> Such appeals were likely made possible by the CA's productive relationship with the Foreign Office, discussed in chapter three.

The motivations behind supporting some cases, and declining it in others, however, seem to go deeper than simply practical considerations. After all, the Association could, too, have undertaken a collection to provide for the destitute Mr Brown. Ultimately, due to the limits of the recorded minutes of the CA, we may only speculate upon the reasons for their denial of support. Perhaps the committee had little sympathy for a man ruined by his own poor investments. Perhaps, too, they felt that as these occurred in Ceylon it was beyond the duty of the Association to intervene in this matter—perhaps a feeling compounded by the fact that a 'Ceylon Association' already existed.<sup>28</sup> Conversely, in the case of the dependents of Sir Chaloner Alabaster, Everard Fraser and Dr Satchwell Smith they had been left to struggle financially through no fault of their own. All were members of the British community in China, too, rather than Ceylon. Certainly, concepts of the deserving and undeserving poor played a later role in determining whether the Association would support appeals and collections related to famines in China and they may also have been at work here.<sup>29</sup>

Certainly, we must also view the collections for the families of Alabaster, and especially Fraser, in the framework of strategic philanthropy—a concept reflected in many of the CA's larger collections. Consular salaries were a matter of considerable interest for the British commercial community in China. A good salary was required to attract top quality recruits into the service, and top quality recruits would, in turn, provide better prospects for commerce. Much to the annoyance of the British commercial community in China salaries had been considered comparatively low for a considerable period, impacted by the cost of official entertaining—met from

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<sup>27</sup> The Case was mentioned in Newspapers both in the East and the American Press. See for example "Outrages at Nanking" *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) 28 March. "The Late Dr. L.S. Smith" *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser* (Singapore) 30 April 1927. "Harrowing Tales of Narrow Escapes from Nanking Riots Told by Refugees" *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. The response of the CA is recorded in the Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 22 December 1927, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>28</sup> We may speculate that the Association saw Ceylon as it did Manila—beyond its scope politically, although welcoming returned expatriates from the country to join the Association for social reasons. Falling into this area of uncertainty may have led to this claim being denied. See the annual report for 1889-90, unpaginated, available at Annual Reports, 1889-98, CHAS/A/01. Information on the Ceylon Association is scant, although its founding date is noted in Chris Cook, *Sources in British Political History 1900-1951: Volume 1: A Guide to the Archives of Selected Organizations and Societies* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1975), p.107.

<sup>29</sup> Earlier ethnic associations readily made such distinctions, giving to those of 'good character' only and holding disdain for the 'notorious' 'unworthy' or 'lazy.' See, for example, Sullivan, 'That Charity which begins at Home', p.319 and pp.332-3.

salaries—the high cost of expatriate life, and the payment of UK income tax, only paid in China by British government employees.<sup>30</sup> As early as 1853 a Mrs. Sullivan complained to the Foreign Office that, due to these expenses, her now departed husband had failed to provide her with an income upon which she could continue to live.<sup>31</sup> Such a case was by no means unique. Widows of consular men received no ongoing payment, with salaries stopping abruptly upon death—something often closer than expected due to the ‘health hazards’ of China—and many were left to rely on ‘whip rounds’ of the ‘open-handed’ treaty port communities.<sup>32</sup>

Displeasure with these salaries—both for their human cost and their damage to commercial prospects—was prominently showcased by the CA, with their annual reports from 1916 to 1920 focusing heavily on the matter. A change in exchange rates had, in 1916, caused a ‘very serious reduction’ in the sterling worth of consular salaries, which were paid in Spanish dollars.<sup>33</sup> Although by the 1920 annual report the CA could report an increase in consular pay, they still considered it to be ‘inadequate’ in respect of a ‘great rise of the cost of living’ in China.<sup>34</sup> Fraser’s death in 1922 therefore created not only the need for a collection, but also the opportunity to use this collection as evidence of the inadequacy of consular salaries, and bring this once again to the attention of the British government, now in a manner more emotive than simple direct criticism in correspondence.

One final individual effort, worthy of note as it highlights a key benefit of the CA’s structure in dealing with such matters, came, to the CA’s surprise, from internal rather than external sources. In 1941 they became aware that the current secretary E.M. Gull was approaching retirement and had given 27 years of service in the employment of British interests in China.<sup>35</sup> Despite this, the CA had failed to make any provision for a pension fund upon which he could retire. To resolve this Sir George Macdonogh placed requests with the major China firms and managed to ensure the creation of a

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<sup>30</sup> P.D Coates, *The China Consuls: British Consular Officers, 1843-1943* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1988), p.88.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.91-2

<sup>33</sup> Annual report for 1916-17, p.ix, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07.

<sup>34</sup> Annual report for 1919-20, p.xi, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07.

<sup>35</sup> His career included serving as secretary of the joint CA/Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, and then as the CA’s London Secretary. See Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 16 October 1941, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937- December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943- December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8. Gull had also, as noted below, served in the First World War as an officer of the Chinese Labour Corps. He also authored numerous works on China.

fund which totalled over £3,000.<sup>36</sup> That the Association alone, without the support of these firms could not have provided EM Gull with any sort of pension fund approaching this amount is clear from the Association's financial records, which showed assets of £1,604 in this year.<sup>37</sup>

The collection for E.M. Gull evidences one of the major strengths of the CA in terms of philanthropic and benevolent endeavours: as an association representative of all of the major China firms, those who subscribed would be well aware of the amounts subscribed by competitors. In practice this ensured that no single company would be forced to foot an unacceptable amount of the bill and that no company could not contribute without the others being aware of this. This concept—that the CA's organisational structure ensured everyone gave fairly—countered what has been called the 'free rider' problem that is often inherent in corporate philanthropy.<sup>38</sup> Visibility and accountability, provided through the third party of the CA, ensured that all firms gave fairly, and saw their donation recorded. This would prove a key mechanism in the Association's larger schemes.

Viewed together, these efforts to provide support to individuals reveal notable patterns often repeated in the CA's larger collections and schemes. Those left requiring assistance through no fault of their own, regardless of the nature of this assistance, were more likely to receive the support of the CA than others. More importantly, they highlight that the CA itself lacked the funds to offer a significant sum to individuals. Consequently, they certainly would be unable to offer large sums to larger philanthropic schemes and instead focused on using their ability to organise, and ensure that all linked members and firms contributed fairly, to help those who required assistance.

### **The China Association as a benevolent network during famine and war**

Whereas the cases above focus upon help given to individuals, this was by no means the limit of the involvement of the CA with benevolent causes. As a prominent network through which information from China returned to Britain the CA inevitably

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<sup>36</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 16 October 1941. Multinational firm Unilever refused to contribute, a decision symptomatic of a poor relationship with the CA at the time. This seems to be due to the Anglo-Dutch nature of the company, which made it reluctant to deal with the British focused CA. See Putten, *Corporate Behaviour and Political Risk*, p.238.

<sup>37</sup> Annual report for 1941-2, p.49, available at Annual Reports, 1935-42, CHAS/A/10.

<sup>38</sup> Porter and Kramer, 'The Competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy'.

became involved in the collection and dissemination of both small and large scale humanitarian aid, most notably in times of famine and warfare in China. As the examples below show, the CA utilised similar methods to those learned from individual appeals prominently to do so.

### *Famine*

Famine in China was the first major cause which saw the CA turn their attention eastwards, attempting to alleviate distress by collecting for, and organising, a number of significant funds. The history of famine relief in China in the period under consideration in this study is one that has received some attention, with works focusing on the China International Famine Relief Fund [CIFRF]—a joint Chinese and foreign institution—and others noting the importance of foreign intervention in alleviating the damage of famines and even operating proactively to attempt to improve Chinese infrastructure and reduce their occurrence.<sup>39</sup> Focusing on larger trends, famine has historically been common in China—though perhaps not to the extent that some contemporaries believed—and this was exacerbated in the period under consideration by the failing infrastructure of the nineteenth century Qing Empire and the rise of warlordism.<sup>40</sup> Transnational collections for Asian famines were long established by the time of the CA, too, with the first London based collection for Indian famine occurring in 1861, with an 1877 appeal drawing support from throughout the ‘British World.’<sup>41</sup>

The CA’s first involvement with such a cause came with the occurrence of a famine in 1907, 14 years before the founding of the CIFRF. Acting alongside other groups, though collecting for a distinct CA-led fund, the Association utilised their role as a prominent hub of China connections in Britain to forward a ‘special appeal ... to all members of the Association’ alongside the chairman approaching ‘a number of firms and individuals privately for subscriptions.’ Both of these efforts were said to have met with ‘very sympathetic support’, and in conjunction with a public appeal ‘inserted in a number of the most influential London and Provincial newspapers’ the

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<sup>39</sup> See Nathan, *A History of the China International Famine Relief Commission*; Li, *Fighting Famine in North China*, pp.302-3.

<sup>40</sup> Nathan, *A History of the China International Famine Relief Commission*; Bickers, *Out of China*, p.76.

<sup>41</sup> G. Brewis “‘Fill full the mouth of famine’: Voluntary action in Indian famine relief 1896-1901’ *Modern Asian Studies*, 44, 4 (2010), pp.894-6.

fund quickly reached a total of £2,700.<sup>42</sup> Following further appeals to firms, businesses and individuals known to the CA as well as the support of various missionary societies linked with China when the fund closed some four months later the amount raised came to the ‘satisfactory’ total of £9,210.7.0.<sup>43</sup>

This success seems to have seen the CA develop a good reputation as a charitable network, and a series of similar requests for help followed. But they also show that the Association was not always willing to respond so positively and offer insight into why the CA could choose to refuse to take part in such collections. When 1912, 1920-21 and 1925 saw appeals made to the CA to spearhead appeals for Famine relief in China, two of these were rejected outright, and one resulted in only minor involvement. In 1912, the Association cited a lack of corroborative information on the crisis from its own sources—specifically its branch in Shanghai—and the impossibility of verifying that the funds would be used appropriately as the reasons for its rejection.<sup>44</sup> Eight years later, in 1920, the CA accepted a position on the committee of a similar appeal, though they did not raise donations independently.<sup>45</sup> The following year the CA espoused the belief that ‘depression in trade and over-taxation’ would make a successful appeal unlikely in the face of an earthquake and resultant famine, and further that ‘in such wide-spread areas it is doubtful if the money subscribed ever reached a tithe of those for whom it as intended’.<sup>46</sup> Finally, the appeal of 1925 saw the Association caution against a collection, worried that funds raised would be ‘squandered’ by Chinese recipients, with the committee also agreeing that little support for the appeal would be forthcoming until there was first strong evidence of China moving to resolve internal problems and help itself.<sup>47</sup>

These philanthropic activities document a highly critical approach towards appeals for humanitarian relief by the CA. In the case of the 1907 fund, the CA moved

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<sup>42</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 19 February 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4. The advert itself noted that ‘It is estimated that something like 10,000,000 people are affected; many of them are actually starving, and must be fed daily if they are to escape death’. See “Classified Ad 7 -- No Title.” *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester, England), 16 February 1907.

<sup>43</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 4 June 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

<sup>44</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 16 January 1912, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>45</sup> Annual report for 1920-21, p.viii, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07.

<sup>46</sup> Annual report for 1920-21, p.x, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07.

<sup>47</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 February 1925, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

rapidly to exert all the influence it could muster. Yet in 1912, 1920 and 1925, the Association proved wary, and even cautioned against the idea of fundraising. Predominantly, the CA's decisions were based on two factors. First, China was not seen as deserving of help: a country split following the 1911 revolution and locked in the grip of competing warlords, bandits and secret societies was one the CA was not prepared to help until it restored some stability.<sup>48</sup>

Such a lack of stability and internal strife caused another, more practical problem. Against this background the CA struggled to identify both the source of appeals, and the supposed recipients of funds, as trustworthy. For the CA, an association which depended on the creation of social capital and trust between its members to further its own aims, forwarding an appeal for donations which later could have turned out to be false, or see funds poorly spent, would have been extremely damaging. When it came to collecting for appeals, they were therefore understandably cautious.

Ultimately, while the 1907 collection again emphasises the strength of the CA as an organisational body, well-versed and efficient in heading appeals, later rejections show they were tempered by caution and wary of appeals they could not verify the legitimacy of. The CA were also wary of raising for funds which they could not control the distribution of, an experience that would prove formative for the methods they chose to apply in their reaction to the appeals related to the second Sino-Japanese war, discussed later.

### *The China Association and the First World War*

First, however, we must turn to the CA's response to earlier conflicts, notably the First World War. As a British Association, the CA maintained a patriotic identity throughout its lifetime and a joined a host of other bodies who mobilized to support the war effort.<sup>49</sup> Of these, several are notable as they seem to have been undertaken purely for patriotic reasons, rather than due to any links to East Asia. An appeal for

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<sup>48</sup> For a general overview see James E. Sheridan 'The warlord era: politics and militarism under the Peking government, 1916-28' in J.K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China Vol 12; Republican China, 1912-1949, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>49</sup> In this vein, the CA joined a huge number of other patriotic bodies who mobilized charitable efforts to support the First World War. Around 18,000 new charities were created, a 50% increase on the number in existence pre-war. Total collections came to between £100m and £150m. This in itself built upon earlier efforts, including the Lloyd's Patriotic Fund, founded in 1803 by the Lloyd's insurance market. P.G. Grant, *Philanthropy and Voluntary Action in the First World War: Mobilizing Charity* (Routledge, 2014), pp.4-9.

donations to the Red Cross saw the Annual Dinner for the year cancelled and it was requested that members instead subscribed their dinner fee to the fund. Later, the call was forwarded to Eastern banks and insurance companies.<sup>50</sup> Another appeal to members for a collection for the troops fighting in Europe saw £200 raised by the CA London Branch. £25 was given to the Chambers of Commerce 'Newspapers for the fleet' fund with the remaining amount spent, at the suggestion of the war office, on 900 lbs. of tobacco and 270,000 cigarettes for the troops.<sup>51</sup> These collections evidence the patriotic fervour of the Association which had always identified as purely British, and saw itself as a defender of British interests in East Asia. Indeed, a rare example of the CA utilising its own funds came when full pay was granted, for the period of his absence, to employee P.G. Lambert when he departed with his regiment for France in 1914.<sup>52</sup> Lambert had served as assistant secretary of the CA for nine years, and was sadly killed on 21 March 1918, leading his men in his role as second lieutenant of the 25<sup>th</sup> Northumberland Fusiliers.<sup>53</sup>

Whilst these collections focused purely upon the War in Britain and Europe it was inevitable due to the nature of the Association that others undertaken would be geographically linked to China and East Asia. A collection by the Shanghai branch and other Shanghai-based Associations in August 1914 raised some £450, Tls 10,000 and \$5,660 for the Prince of Wales fund for the relief of distress caused by the War.<sup>54</sup> The largest undertaking by the CA was, however, to help repatriate men from East Asia who wished to fight in Europe.

This effort, beginning in October 1914, saw a collection of over £4,000 made by the CA's Shanghai branch to assist with the cost of passage to Britain of those men resident in East Asia who wished to fight for their country.<sup>55</sup> On 16 October this

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<sup>50</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 October 1915, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>51</sup> H.C. Wilcox to the Committee, 29 October 1914, Circulars Vol. XI, 164-184, January – November 1914, CHAS/MCP/19 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>52</sup> H.C. Wilcox to the Committee, undated, Circulars Vol. XI, 164-184, January – November 1914, CHAS/MCP/19.

<sup>53</sup> Annual report for 1917-18, p.x, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07. In 1920 a CA employee, Mrs Lambert, received a £50 P.A. pay rise, although whether this was a relation, or even the widow of P.G. Lambert, the records do not specify. see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 7 December 1920, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>54</sup> Shanghai Branch to London, 24 September 1914, Circulars Vol. XI, 164-184, January – November 1914, CHAS/MCP/19.

<sup>55</sup> The history of the first contingent, who travelled on the S.S. Suwa Maru, is told in Robert Bickers, *Getting Stuck in For Shanghai: Putting the Kibosh on the Kaiser from the Bund: The British at Shanghai and the Great War* (Penguin, 2014).



culminated in the sailing of the 'S.S. Suwa Maru' which departed carrying 110 men who intended to enlist, 108 of whom had been helped financially to some extent by the CA's collection. Smaller contingents of 30 and 27 men departed, again with CA help, over the coming two months.<sup>56</sup> This continued for the next six months, and by their own reckoning the Shanghai branch of the Association had helped over 350 men return to Britain by June 1915.<sup>57</sup>

Upon their arrival in Britain the CA's London Committee took over the welfare of the soldiers, promising to render 'all possible assistance to these men', and subsequent efforts were made to both ameliorate the conditions of those on the front lines, as well as those wounded in service.<sup>58</sup> Clothing was given by contributors in Shanghai, returned to London by the British Women's Work Association, and then distributed to troops by a committee in London under the management of Mrs. Townsend, acting as an extension of the CA.<sup>59</sup> Wounded troops were also supported, and in 1916 the Shanghai Branch Volunteer sub-committee widened its aims, to administer a fund for those who had been wounded in the war.<sup>60</sup> Corporal Lever, R.F.A., upon his return to Shanghai after being invalided by gas poisoning in 1917 noted these various efforts were much appreciated by all Shanghai residents still fighting in Europe.<sup>61</sup> A final charitable subscription relating to the war began in Shanghai in 1919, when, instead of subscribing to a fund for a public celebration upon the return of the Shanghai Volunteers, the CA Shanghai Branch instead subscribed to a fund which would be directly distributed to the returning men.<sup>62</sup>

While this material assistance saw the troops given passage home and support during the conflict, the CA also assisted them through the use of its political contacts and wider networks which, while not necessarily charitable acts, formed an important

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<sup>56</sup> A great deal of material relating to the organisation of these contingents is to be found throughout Circulars Vol. XII, 185-200, November 1914 – January 1915, CHAS/MCP/20 and Circulars Vol. XIII, 201-215, January 1915 – March 1916, CHAS/MCP/21.

<sup>57</sup> China Association to the War Office, 12 June 1915, Circulars Vol. XIII, 201-215, January 1915 – March 1916, CHAS/MCP/21.

<sup>58</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 5 January 1915, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>59</sup> Annual report for 1915-6, pp.ix-x, available at Annual Reports, 1915-23, CHAS/A/07.

<sup>60</sup> Circular to the General Committee, no.236, 7 February 1917, Circulars Vol. XV, 231-244, November 1916 – September 1917, CHAS/MCP/23.

<sup>61</sup> Circular to the General Committee, no.235, 12 February 1917, Circulars Vol. XV, 231-244, November 1916 – September 1917, CHAS/MCP/23.

<sup>62</sup> Circular to the General Committee, no. 266, 20 August 1919, Circulars Vol. XVII, 261-278, February 1919 – April 1920, CHAS/MCP/25 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

part of their efforts. Some, although not all, of the returnees reported their details to the London committee, who, in turn, used their contacts to gather information about the men whilst they fought in Europe, returning this information to Shanghai, likely to benefit friends and family who remained in East Asia.<sup>63</sup> The CA in London also acted as a mediator between the troops and government departments. In some cases, this took the form of representing an individual, such as one returnee who was rejected for service by army doctors. The CA felt, however, that as a veteran of the South African War the man was of use to the war effort and contacted the authorities to suggest he might be found a post instructing new recruits.<sup>64</sup> More often this mediation took the form of representing the body of men as a whole. These representations ranged from enquiring with the War Office as to the availability of return passages following the end of conflict and regarding particular organizational points linked to demobilization—including collaboration with the Department of Overseas Trade to secure early release for ‘soldiers whose services are urgently required for the re-establishment of British commerce abroad’—to writing directly to the Prime Minister when a resolution made in Parliament in 1919 failed to mention troops who had returned to fight from overseas countries.<sup>65</sup> These undertakings were especially praised by the United Services Association in Shanghai, who wrote to thank the CA for their ‘timely intervention with the War Office and other authorities’, bodies individual soldiers would have struggled to deal with.<sup>66</sup>

It is worthwhile here to recap an unexpected consequence of the CA helping to link Shanghai with the conflict in Europe that we have already noted. In the immediate pre-war years, Eurasians were a generally socially excluded group in Shanghai, and this extended to their barring from the local branch of the CA. Having served their country, however, the Shanghai branch of the Association made moves to permit their membership—although this change was not replicated in London.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 5 January 1915.

<sup>64</sup> Volunteers, 19 February 1915, Circulars Vol. XIII, 201-215, January 1915 – March 1916, CHAS/MCP/21.

<sup>65</sup> War Office to China Association, 24 June 1915, Circulars Vol. XIII, 201-215, January 1915 – March 1916, CHAS/MCP/21; The China Contingent, 6 August 1919, Circulars Vol. XVII, 261-278, February 1919 – April 1920, CHAS/MCP/25; “Multiple Essay Items.” *The Far Eastern Review* (Manila, Philippines), Vol XV, no. 3, 1919.

<sup>66</sup> The United Services Association to the China Association, 5 December 1919, Circulars Vol. XVII, 261-278, February 1919 – April 1920, CHAS/MCP/25.

<sup>67</sup> Robert Bickers notes that pre-war, Eurasians remained excluded socially in Shanghai, see Bickers, *Getting Stuck in For Shanghai*, p.10.

Whereas these appeals had been made to benefit British citizens and were encouraged by the Association's patriotism others also supported Chinese citizens. The most notable of these was the appeal made by the London Committee in 1917 to provide for the entertainment of the members of the Chinese Labour Corps. Recruited in China, and brought to Europe, they served the British and French governments and performed non front line tasks for the allied forces.<sup>68</sup> 95,000 Chinese were recruited by the British government alone, and some 140,000 came to Europe in total. Such was their impact that the commander of the second group of men to arrive—later CA Secretary Edward Manico Gull—described their emigration (although he exaggerated for propaganda reasons) as one that would take its place as 'one of the most important aspects of the Great European War,' and modern scholars have regarded the contribution to the war effort as greater than that of any single British colony.<sup>69</sup>

The recreation of these men was delegated to the Y.M.C.A. who in 1917 appealed to the CA to arrange a collection for huts to be used for entertainment purposes.<sup>70</sup> Originally, the appeal met with hostility from the Shanghai and Hongkong branches of the Association, who felt that if it were admitted that the British government could not provide basic recreation facilities for the Chinese labourers it had employed, Sino-British relations and British prestige would be damaged.<sup>71</sup> The London Committee, however, decided to press ahead with a collection after ascertaining this was approved of by both the War Office and by the British authorities in Peking.<sup>72</sup> £10,000 was quickly raised, with several firms subscribing the required amount to build their own entertainment huts.<sup>73</sup> These efforts were a great success, with the entertainment provided including film shows and performances from touring Y.M.C.A. concert parties.<sup>74</sup> When the work of the Chinese labour corps halted in 1920

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<sup>68</sup> Michael Summerskill, *China on the Western Front: Britain's Chinese Work Force in the First World War* (London: Michael Summerskill, 1982).

<sup>69</sup> Mark O'Neill, *The Chinese Labour Corps: The Forgotten Chinese Labourers of the First World War* (Penguin, 2014), p.52. Summerskill, *China on the Western Front*, p.7. Xu Guoqi, *Strangers on the Western Front: Chinese Workers in the Great War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), p.1.

<sup>70</sup> Brian C. Fawcett, 'The Chinese Labour Corps in France, 1917-1921' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hongkong Branch*, 40 (2000), p.51; O'Neill, *The Chinese Labour Corps*, pp.62-7.

<sup>71</sup> Circular no. 245, 28 August 1917, Circulars Vol. XVI, 245-260, September 1917 – February 1919, CHAS/MCP/24 China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Circular no.247, 18 January 1918, Circulars Vol. XVI, 245-260, September 1917 – February 1919, CHAS/MCP/24

<sup>74</sup> Summerskill, *China on the Western Front*, pp.170-4.

the Chinese Y.M.C.A. in France wrote to express their sincere gratitude for the collections undertaken by the CA.<sup>75</sup>

The gesture was, however, not driven by purely benevolent intentions, and the potential benefits derived by the firms that donated were clear. Each hut funded was to be emblazoned with the name of their firm in both Chinese and English to evidence their donation and it seems, hopefully, increase goodwill from the Chinese labourers towards these firms alongside their general image. Although there is debate over exact figures, these labourers possessed a considerable level of literacy, something contributed to by wider YMCA programmes to improve the education of the men which taught both Chinese and English to those who came to France illiterate.<sup>76</sup> This ensured that a good number of the men could read the names of their benefactors, making sure this effort at improving the image of the companies did not go to waste—and we may speculate that even the illiterate amongst them could have, in the spirit of curiosity, asked their more learned compatriots to decipher the names on the huts for them. Whether the gesture stood a chance of success when considered against the terms the men were signed up to work under—ten hours a day, for seven days a week, and unable to leave their camps for fear of their socializing with French citizens damaging images of racial superiority—is, however, questionable.<sup>77</sup>

From their response to the problems created by the First World War, it is possible to identify many of the key features that allowed the CA to engage with charitable causes and collections, and also the form these took. As with collections for individuals, the CA's unique position and connections meant they were the one of few bodies who could fulfil the role they undertook supporting both British and Chinese members of the allied forces. This wealth of networks and connections, combined with the management experience of committee members, meant they could react quickly to calls for support from great distances and be involved at all levels, from organising collections to liaising with the British government. Indeed, in undertaking to support

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<sup>75</sup> Huts for Chinese labour corps., circular no. 271, 23 February 1920, Circulars Vol. XVII, 261-278, February 1919 – April 1920, CHAS/MCP/25.

<sup>76</sup> Summerskill, *China on the Western Front*, p.170 argues the men were exceptionally literate by Chinese standards of the period. Work by Xu Guoqi, *Strangers on the Western Front* pp.191-2 suggests around 20% of the men were literate, and notes that education programs to increase this were a great success.

<sup>77</sup> Circular no.246, 29 November 1917, Circulars Vol. XVI, 245-260, September 1917 – February 1919, CHAS/MCP/24; O'Neill, *The Chinese Labour Corps*, pp.44-50. For further detail see also Summerskill, *China on the Western Front*, chapter ten, The Willing Labourers Contract, and chapter fifteen, Discipline—and Discontent.

both the contingents of men who returned from East Asia to fight and the Chinese Labour Corps., the Association helped to support two major contributions to the War effort linked to China.

*Times of high crisis: from 1937 to c.1955*

The lessons learned by the CA in responding to both the First World War and earlier famine appeals would prove to be essential formative experiences when the British situation in China saw unexpected, rapid deterioration. In September 1937 this occurred against the background of the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War. Conditions around Peking and throughout China deteriorated dramatically, with Shanghai alone receiving an estimated one million refugees.<sup>78</sup> Appeals for support were received from the CA Tientsin Branch and the combined CA branch and Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai. When these were followed by a direct appeal from HM Embassy in Peking and the Foreign Office that the CA might help to ‘obtain funds from some of the philanthropic British visitors or former residents or from those who have some connexion with North China’ secretary E.M. Gull wrote to remind members of the general committee that ‘one of the objects of the Association definitely provides for assistance to “any charitable or benevolent institution or undertakings”’ and argued that ‘the very fact the Association is “The China Association” places it in a position in which it may be expected to take the lead’ in the appeal.<sup>79</sup> The Association began by placing a letter in *The Times*, signed by a wide array of influential persons.<sup>80</sup> Alongside this, the CA formed a sub-committee to manage the matter and made a request to the British Ambassador in China and the Governor of Hongkong to assume the positions of President and Vice-President of the distribution sub-committee. Finally, two further CA suggestions were enacted. First, the appeal was widened to

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<sup>78</sup> For this figure, and a discussion of efforts undertaken by local Shanghai networks and elites, see Nara Dillon, ‘The Politics of Philanthropy: Social Networks and Refugee Relief in Shanghai, 1932-1949’ in Nara Dillon and Jean C. Oi (eds.), *At the Crossroads of Empire: Middlemen, Social Networks and State-Building in Republican Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), pp.186-95.

<sup>79</sup> Circular to the General Committee, 16 September 1937, General Committee Papers, November 1935 – March 1938, CHAS/MCP/41, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>80</sup> “Aid for China” *Times* (London, England), 2 October 1937, p.12. Signatories of this letter show the diversity of those who lent support to the appeal. G.W. Swire and Charles Addis represented British business interests, whilst religious supporters included the Archbishop of Westminster, Arthur Hinsley and J.H. Hertz, Chief Rabbi, amongst numerous others. The Salvation Army lent support and the signature of one of its members, alongside the greater involvement of the British Red Cross. The chairmen of several prominent chambers of commerce also signed the appeal, as did the masters of both Baliol and Trinity College.

ensure that it would provide relief to British subjects in distress, alongside Chinese subjects, and secondly, a communication was sent to the Shanghai branch of the CA, in order that the branch structure of the organisation could furnish information regarding any collections or actions that were underway in China itself.<sup>81</sup>

Unlike earlier failed appeals for help linked to famine, the CA showed very strong commitment to the fund. By October the President and Vice-President of the distribution committee requested by the CA had agreed to serve, and the fund had been joined by the British Red Cross Society and the Conference of British Missionary Societies. Happy that the call had originated from a known source, and able to ensure any funds raised would be distributed through reliable figures in East Asia to both British and Chinese subjects, the Association pressed onwards with their involvement. The fund was originally administered through the offices of the CA and by the CA secretary until at the insistence of the Mayor of London a separate, independent, office to control the fund was created. At the same time the collection was reconstituted as a Lord Mayors fund under the name 'The British Fund for the Relief of Distress in China.' The administrative reorganisation was a disappointment to the CA, who were keen to oversee the fund and felt that an independent office was an unnecessary administrative cost. The Mayor's decision stood, however, and an executive committee representing the three involved bodies was placed in charge of the fund. By October of 1937 it totalled £64,000, with £15,000 cash, £9,000 worth of medical supplies and £2,000 of clothing sent to China.<sup>82</sup>

Although no longer in direct control of the fund, the Association continued to play an organisational role and donations continued to be given. By December of 1937 the fund totalled £79,300.<sup>83</sup> CA involvement continued, though updates become sporadic, and the fund stood at £282,123 by the time of the 1940 annual report.<sup>84</sup> Control seems to have only ended when it was merged with several other bodies to form the United Aid to China Fund in 1942.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 22 September 1937, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

<sup>82</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 12 November 1937, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937 - December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943 - December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8.

<sup>83</sup> "The Lord Mayor's Fund" *Times* (London, England), 24 December 1937, p.3.

<sup>84</sup> Annual report for 1940-1, p.61, available at Annual Reports, 1935-42, CHAS/A/10.

<sup>85</sup> "United Aid To China" *Times* (London, England), 30 July 1942, p.2.

Independent of this larger collection the CA also contributed to several other schemes to help those who had been affected by the conflict. A scheme to help internees was given 100 guineas in 1945, and the CA attempted to use their influence to increase government help for this group.<sup>86</sup> In the same year, and in one of the more striking individual donations by an Association member, the use of a house was gifted, rent free, by Mr. Marden to any returned internees who were unable to afford accommodation themselves.<sup>87</sup> Finally, in 1946 the CA undertook to raise funds for the foundation of a hostel to provide affordable accommodation for those who had returned from East Asia as a result of the conflict, eventually contributing £1,400 to the scheme.<sup>88</sup>

From these responses it is possible to note several important details about the CA's responses to charitable endeavours. Firstly, as with earlier appeals to collect for the relief of famines, they were much more likely to become involved in fund raising activities if they could ascertain that aid collected would be efficiently and reliably distributed. For the CA, this meant direct control of the administration if possible, and at least the involvement of senior British figures they trusted or knew either personally or through their network of contacts. Secondly, the CA's request that British subjects benefit from the fund suggests they were more likely to help their own countrymen, for whom they would perhaps have had greater empathy—behaving in a manner akin to ethnic associations.<sup>89</sup> On a wider level the outbreak of War and the exceptional circumstances this brought seems to have been a catalyst not just for the CA and its members to give, but also the wider public who contributed to the fund.

While the surrender of Japan in 1945 marked the end of the war in China it was not the end of charitable appeals and undertakings related to the conflict. Many British subjects in East Asia had been left destitute by the war, or else found their jobs to have disappeared with the British surrender of extraterritoriality in 1943. The British government alone committed itself to ex gratia payments of £1.5m and a £70,000 per year pension plan to support those who had been employed by various British

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<sup>86</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 5 September 1945, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937 - December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943 - December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8.

<sup>87</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 1 August 1945, Minutes of the General Committee, November 1937 - December 1945, & Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 1943 - December 1945, CHAS/MCP/8.

<sup>88</sup> Circular to the General Committee, 27 November 1946, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1946, CHAS/MCP/46.

<sup>89</sup> Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together*, p.180.

Municipal Councils in China, but this still left many in need of support. Small business owners, settlers who ran taverns or shops, for example, could not easily uproot themselves and follow the exodus of British multinationals from Shanghai to Hongkong.<sup>90</sup> The CA was recognised as one of the bodies best placed to help deal with their repatriation and subsequent re-settlement in Britain and was granted £10,000 to do so. Funding came largely from the closing Far Eastern Relief Fund but also in part from the CA's hostel scheme which broken even as a financial concern and was thus able to return the original £1,400 the CA donation.<sup>91</sup>

In line with its usual methods the CA delegated a sub-committee to administer the fund which, originally, supported 'a considerable number of former British residents of China' who had been interned and were left unable 'to take up the threads of their life out [In China] again.' It was noted that many of these returnees had been reduced to living in 'institutions run by the Ministry of Health or by charitable organisations' or were 'supported by grants from the Assistance Board.' The method the CA employed was to provide 'one or two grants' to recent returnees 'to help them find their feet' plus the gift of 'small "presents" of £10 to £25 at Christmas time.'<sup>92</sup> Although this was, as the CA's secretary noted, not able to support the lifestyle these returnees had been used to, it was nonetheless valuable support as he informed the British Association of Malaysia and Singapore;

I, unhappily, have day to day contact with a number of these people. They are in the position that in November, they have to decide whether to buy another hundredweight of coal to keep warm, or the new pair of shoes which the Woman has been desperately needing for some time.<sup>93</sup>

Alongside monetary help CA connected firms were also contacted to seek employment for returnees, as in the case of a Captain Bidwell who had left China in

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<sup>90</sup> These small business owners, as well as the British government gifts to former Municipal Council Employees are discussed in Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.237-44.

<sup>91</sup> Circular to the General Committee, 27 November 1946, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1946, CHAS/MCP/46; Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee, 23 October 1947, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1947, CHAS/MCP/47.

<sup>92</sup> Draft: The Association's Relief Fund, an appeal by the Chairman, Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 10 November 1952, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1952, CHAS/MCP/50B, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>93</sup> CA to Malayan Association, 30 December 1952, Papers of the British Association of Malaysia and Singapore: Correspondence with related associations: Correspondence with the China Association, including annual reports and bulletins (14 May 1947 - 20 February 1957), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, MSS EUR F168/73.



1938 and served in the Royal Navy during the war. Ineligible for help through the relief committee as he was not an internee, the CA secretary instead appealed to Sir John Masson of John Swire and Sons, hoping to find the man a job related to cargo inspection.<sup>94</sup>

The method of small donations continued until 1951, when it was envisaged that the British government's disposal of Japanese assets in the United Kingdom would pay for the permanent upkeep of those still struggling. However when the disposal actually resulted in each former internee receiving a £15 lump sum, regardless of requirement and much to the CA's surprise, an alternative solution was required. This manifested in a decision to provide small repeated payments, similar to a pension, to those who were too old or sick to work.<sup>95</sup> The fund was reconstituted in 1953 as a trust named 'The China Association Benevolent Fund' which was able to support the remaining poverty stricken returnees for an estimated seven to ten years.<sup>96</sup>

Such had been the success of the CA in administering this scheme that when £20,000 was returned to Britain from the 'British Community Interests' fund in China during 1953—to protect the fund from the Chinese government—that the CA sub-committee for Charity was entrusted, too, with the role of distributing this money to those deserving.<sup>97</sup> By 1954 there were still some 32 returnees receiving periodical grants, totalling £972.<sup>98</sup> This number increased steadily, likely due to the continued PRC efforts to close China to foreign firms and citizens, so that, by 1957, the Association was helping to support some 40 returnees. With the fund exhausted further grants were then made from the China Community fund, on a year by year basis, which allowed continued provision to returnees to be made until at least 1967.<sup>99</sup> With ex-employees of the Shanghai Municipal council finding their fixed pensions of ever decreasing value and the British government unwilling to provide any increase, instead

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<sup>94</sup> G.E. Mitchell O.B.E. to Sir John R. Masson., 14 December 1948, China Association Bulletins and Circulars, JSS/11/5/2/1/, John Swire & Sons Ltd. Archive.

<sup>95</sup> Draft: The Association's Relief Fund, an appeal by the Chairman, Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 10 November 1952.

<sup>96</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 18 September 1953, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1953, CHAS/MCP/50C.

<sup>97</sup> Circular to members of the General Committee, 17 November 1953, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1953, CHAS/MCP/50C.

<sup>98</sup> Annual report for 1954, p.25, available at Annual Reports, 1953-57, CHAS/A/11, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>99</sup> Annual report for 1957, p.29, available at Annual Reports, 1953-57, CHAS/A/11.

laying such responsibilities at the door of the PRC, the importance of funds such as that of the CA continued for longer than they likely envisioned.<sup>100</sup>

That the CA was entrusted with the distribution of such considerable funds serves to underscore, from their early involvement with the 1907 China Famine appeal, that they had come to be seen and relied upon as an efficient organizational body when it came to the collection and distribution of charity. Using their unique network of contacts and influence, they became the only body with the sufficient knowledge to lead such undertakings. It is also notable that the acquisition of these funds finally allowed the CA to complete a goal it had held from its very inception 57 years before: having a solid bank of funds from which charity could be dispensed, although it is probable this occurred through circumstances they could not have foreseen, nor that they would have wished for.

### **The China Association, education and philanthropy**

Alongside this history of efforts to provide funds for the large scale relief of suffering and to help individuals, either directly or by acting as a fundraising and organisational intermediary, the CA's benevolence also extended into backing philanthropic schemes, supporting plans to produce long term solutions to educational problems in both Britain and China. Indeed, the CA's efforts to provide education in London would mark one of the pinnacles of the Association's achievements. By assessing these efforts it is possible to gain a great deal of insight into the reasoning of a body such as the CA with regards to its philanthropic efforts, as well as greater understanding of the strengths and limitations of voluntary associations and philanthropy as a whole.

Educational schemes are often ones in which philanthropic bodies are active. Beginning in Britain with a substantial history of schools in pre-industrial England being provided for the poor by charity, 'founded by philanthropy, either from charitable impulse or ulterior motive,' the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century also saw

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<sup>100</sup> These grants, of varying sizes are recorded in the annual reports for 1958 to 1967, for which years 1957-1962 are available at Annual Reports, 1957-62, CHAS/A/12, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London, and also Annual Report, 1962-3, 63-4, 64-5, 65-6 and CHAS/A/23-26, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London. Unfortunately there is no publically available copy of the report for 1966-67. For the decreasing value of pensions see the discussion in Hansard, (available online at <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1963/nov/25/shanghai-municipal-council-ex-employees>, last accessed 21 October 2017).

substantial boosts provided to University education by private donations.<sup>101</sup> As we have already seen, too, the City of London was a hub for charitable funding of educational schemes, backed to a large extent by the largest of the livery companies. The CA entered into this well established realm with a great deal of enthusiasm, and, on occasion, provided the financial backing to reinforce this.

### *Appeals for educational schemes in China*

The first appeals to note were actually a series of appeals, all linked to the foundation of the University of Hongkong. They highlight from where in the CA support for such appeals emerged, and define their preferred methods for doing so. Furthermore, the historical record of one of these appeals shows that appraising whether voluntary associations gave to—or deserved to receive credit for—appeals can be a difficult undertaking, and one which must be carefully approached.

The CA's relationship with the University began in 1909. To support plans to found the University, Dr. Cantlie, a man with a long relationship to medicine in the colony, was seeking backing (from British donors) to establish a College of Medicine in Hongkong.<sup>102</sup> Although a suggestion that each member of the CA pledge a subscription of £1 five years was dismissed as impractical, enthusiasm for the scheme amongst the committee of the Association was impressive. With German and French schemes to found Universities in Tsingtao and Indo-China respectively underway, members worried that the lack of a similar scheme for Hongkong would harm British prestige. Consequently, the committee decided to offer their backing not only to the College of Medicine that Cantlie had proposed, but to the wider scheme to establish a university. The Colonial government had agreed to provide a site for the University, and Hongkong resident Mr. Mody had pledged approximately £29,000 to provide the necessary buildings. Still, this left a required endowment of an estimated £110,000.<sup>103</sup>

Attempting to make use of their position as a network hub, an appeal was made to both the Association membership and 27 Chambers of Commerce, including that of

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<sup>101</sup> John Lawson and Harold Silver, *A Social History of Education in England* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1973), p.130 and p.181.

<sup>102</sup> Mark Harrison, 'Cantlie, Sir James (1851–1926)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50530>, last accessed 23 August 2016).

<sup>103</sup> Annual report for 1909, pp.xxviii-xix, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

Manchester. The CA also sought to reach the public by placing appeals in 16 London and provincial newspapers, stressing their opinion that

The University would enhance the standing of the colony and would prove of inestimable advantage to Chinese whether residents in the Empire itself, in Hongkong, in the Straits Settlements, or in Indo-China, by providing facilities for the acquisition of Western learning practically at their doors, while it is hoped that the training would dispose students to remember sympathetically in after life the associations and teachers connected with their education gained in a British colony.<sup>104</sup>

The outcome of these efforts, however, was disappointing. The amount raised originally stood at ‘only £380’ donated by members of the CA. The wider appeals had produced only one reply—and ‘that a refusal’. Later donations saw the amount raised increase only to a total of £665.<sup>105</sup> Whilst this amount was far below what the CA had hoped to raise, the Association’s annual report for the year painted a very different picture.

In communicating the outcome of the appeal to their members, the CA noted that although not subscribed directly from the funds of the CA ‘certain members of the Association and their friends’ had subscribed £40,000, suggesting these donations should, in fact, be seen as a wider CA contribution.<sup>106</sup> In Mellor’s *The University of Hongkong: An Informal History* the collection of the £40,000 is noted as the achievement of J.H. Scott, in his joint role as President of the CA and leading member of John Swire and Sons.<sup>107</sup> In actual fact, the donation totalled £40,665, with £665 of this from the CA appeal. The remaining £40,000 came from John Swire and Sons (£30,000), the Swire owned Taikoo Sugar Refining Co. (£5,000), and the Swire linked Ocean Steamship Company (£5,000).<sup>108</sup> Quite simply, the donation can only be seen as made by John Swire and Sons and was made at least partially to repair the public

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<sup>104</sup> “Classified Ad 91 -- No Title.” *The Manchester Guardian* (Manchester, England), 15 May. 1909. For discussion of the scheme see Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 4 May 1909, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

<sup>105</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 8 June 1909, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4. For the final donations see the Associations Annual report for 1909, appendix pp.131, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>106</sup> Annual report for 1909, pp.xxviii-xix, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

<sup>107</sup> Bernard Mellor, *The University of Hongkong: An Informal History* (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 1981), p.27.

<sup>108</sup> Annual report for 1909, appendix pp.131, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05.

image of the company which was facing a boycott after one of their ticket collectors had been accused of kicking an elderly Chinese passenger to death.<sup>109</sup>

In later works the history of this donation was to alter again. In Frank Welsh's *A History of Hongkong* a passage detailing the foundation of the University attributes the £40,000 donation to Butterfield and Swire and frames it as a less than munificent gesture which proved 'enough to have the boycott called off.' Welsh also states, however, that this 'handsome donation... was matched by an equal gift from the China Association.'<sup>110</sup> More contemporary reports seem to have felt similarly, with the *Far Eastern Review* noting that the CA 'warmly supported' the scheme.<sup>111</sup> The CA, then, simply through its association with the collection and, later, confusion on behalf of the author, have gained credit for a large donation they certainly did not make, and unlike the Swire Group, are recorded as making this donation with no negative connotations.

Regardless of whether CA members believed the donation could be attributed to the association or not, that those who appealed on behalf of the Hongkong University scheme felt differently became evident four years later. Again an appeal for funds for Hongkong University was submitted, this time focusing specifically upon the Department for Engineering. Referring to the earlier appeal, the representatives of Hongkong University noted the donation previously given by the CA was small, and they urged that the Association might this time contribute a substantial amount along the lines of a £500 subscription for five years. Despite this, the cause only found ten subscribers amongst the whole of the CA, and although this did contain donations of £100 from Sir Thomas Jackson and George Dodwell, the chairman was left to 'deplore the slow response' to the appeal.<sup>112</sup>

Importantly, these appeals highlight the disagreement that could occur when taking credit for charitable appeals. The CA often drew large amounts of the funds it received for such appeals from big businesses who, on occasion, preferred to take direct credit rather than appear as part of the CA. As discussed above, mechanisms behind the giving of charity are numerous, and it has been noted that some give to

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<sup>109</sup> Mellor, *The University of Hongkong*, p.27.

<sup>110</sup> Welsh, *A History of Hongkong*, pp.356-7.

<sup>111</sup> "The University of Hongkong." *The Far Eastern Review* (Manila, Philippines), Vol X, no. 4, 1913.

<sup>112</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 15 July 1913, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5; Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 23 September 1913, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5; Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 14 October 1913, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

increase personal prestige.<sup>113</sup> This would rely on either self-publicising that a donation had been made, or, more probably, through the inclusion of the donor's name in a published report of the charity or Association to whom they had donated. In this case, a donation recorded as being from 'the China Association' would be of little benefit. It is with a sense of irony that we must note that the donation has in fact been remembered by some as a joint CA and Swire Group undertaking, despite the Swire Group's best efforts.

Yet the enthusiasm of the committee and more prominent members of the CA for university education in China shows the scheme held some interest and promise beyond an opportunity to avoid a boycott. For those members still actively involved in the China Trade it offered a chance to improve Sino-British relations, and create a new generation of the Chinese workforce with Western technical skills, and they were prepared to bankroll the correct type of scheme to a significant extent. Contributions to educational schemes are, after all, potentially cost-effective for corporations, and have been noted as potentially 'a far less expensive way to strengthen a local base of advanced skills than developing training in-house.'<sup>114</sup> In this vein, alongside the donation from the Swire Group, key CA member firms Jardine Matheson and the HSBC donated \$25,000HK and \$50,000HK to the scheme, respectively (around £1920 and £3840).<sup>115</sup> It was simply their prerogative that they chose not to do so under the banner of the CA.

Outside of these members and firms of the inner circles of the Association, however, the response was small at best, and often simply non-existent. For the average member of the Association these schemes offered no tangible benefit. No

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<sup>113</sup> Kidd, *State, Society and the poor in Nineteenth-century England*, p.69; Harbaugh 'What do donations buy?; A model of philanthropy based on prestige and warm glow', pp.269-284.

<sup>114</sup> Porter and Kramer, 'The Competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy', p.9.

<sup>115</sup> Annual report for 1909, appendix pp.131, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05. Historical data regarding the exchange rate between Hongkong dollars and British sterling is not readily available, and perhaps does not exist. However, pre 1935 the dollar was tied to the silver standard. When it was linked to sterling in 1935, it was at a rate of 16 dollars to the pound. Silver was worth 0.64 US dollars per ounce in 1935, compared to a rate of 0.52 US dollars per ounce in 1909. This effectively means a value of 81.25% in 1909 as compared to 1935—or 13 Hongkong dollars to the pound—as the pound and the US dollar retained parity in terms of exchange rates at 4.9 US dollars to the pound in both 1909 and 1935. For this information see G.L.M Clauson, 'The British Colonial Currency System', *The Economic Journal*, 54, 213 (1944), pp.1-25, Henry E. Hillard, 'Silver', (available online at <https://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/commodity/silver/880798.pdf> last accessed October 30 2018) and 'From \$5 to \$1.22: the 200-year journey of the pound against the dollar' (available online at <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/money/special-reports/from-5-to-122-the-200-year-journey-of-the-pound-against-the-doll/> last accessed October 30 2018).

longer directly involved in the China trade, they seem to have had no desire to donate to schemes which would not affect them. Furthermore, in the Associational world of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century Britain, calls for subscriptions to support any number of schemes would likely have been made upon members. Now connected to China in many cases only by their attendance at the Annual Dinner of the CA a donation to a more relevant, or local, scheme with any spare income would perhaps be more probable.

Indeed, the difficulty the CA found in achieving a consistent response to charitable appeals is highlighted by two earlier calls made of the Association for support, both of which were tied to religious schemes. The first of these was made by the Reverend Timothy Richard at the 1897 Annual General Meeting, who, acting in his capacity as secretary for the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge, made a general call for funding to further the spread of western knowledge in China.<sup>116</sup> Rev. Timothy Richard had spent, by this point of his life, some 28 years as a missionary in China.<sup>117</sup> His experiences led him to conclude that China was an ailing power, crippled by its philosophy and customs, and open to attack from would be aggressors. But ‘if the nation were liberated from the bonds of ignorance and harmful custom, and were to receive the light of education – scientific industrial and religious – it might become one of the most powerful nations on earth.’<sup>118</sup> The Society which he represented held similar views, and was keen that the knowledge it disseminated would not only improve the ‘moral and spiritual’ development of the Chinese people, but also their ‘material social [and] intellectual’ development.<sup>119</sup> Richard stressed the success of previous efforts to teach Western knowledge in China by focusing on a Morrison school founded by British merchants in Hongkong, and the achievements of its premier student, the merchant Tong King-Sing. This education had allowed Tong to speak English ‘like a Briton’ and, in his role as the Shanghai, or ‘chief’, comprador of Jardine Matheson he took on a wide variety of roles.

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<sup>116</sup> For Richards comments see The China Association: Annual General Meeting, 9 March 1897, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>117</sup> The Reverend Timothy Richard had first arrived in Shanghai in 1870, and, as the title of his memoirs attests, came to spend a total of 45 years in the country. See Timothy Richard, *Forty-Five Years in China: Reminiscences by Timothy Richard* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1916), p.31.

<sup>118</sup> Richard, *Forty-Five Years in China*, p.7.

<sup>119</sup> *Eleventh annual report of the Society for the Diffusion of Christian & General Knowledge among the Chinese, for the year ending 31st October, 1898*, available online at <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/29750> (last accessed 22 October 2017).

Significantly he was the first manager of their shipping agency as Jardines diversified their business, helped with the firms insurance business, guaranteed the solvency of the firms Chinese constituents, and provided the firm with the majority of its opium intelligence. He further supervised Jardines other compradors, and in these roles acted entrepreneurially for the firm, rather than as a mere go-between with Chinese interests.<sup>120</sup> He was well regarded personally by the foreign community in Tientsin, and was praised by the Rev. Richard as the man who had ‘started the first mines, railways and telegraphs in China.’<sup>121</sup> Following the conclusion of his plea, the Rev. Richard was thanked for his ‘interesting remarks’ and there the matter rested.

Ultimately, the CA did not choose to support Richards’ calls as a combined body. This in itself is unsurprising, as the CA did not possess a solid enough financial base to make large donations from its own funds at this time. Whether individual donations were forthcoming at this meeting is not noted, however no member of the CA present at the meeting continued to donate beyond this specific occasion.<sup>122</sup> A total lack of donations presents more of a conundrum, as a society which aimed to modernise China would seem to be largely in concurrence with the CA, who believed Chinese modernisation would open the interior of the country to trade, through railway construction and the opening of interior rivers to steamships. Indeed, the society in its own report rued that merchants had ‘began to subscribe well’ when the society had originally formed, but ‘not seeing immediate results’ had ‘got faint-hearted’ and withdrawn their support. With a likely outcome that ‘merchants would be among the chief reapers’ of the society’s work, they hoped they might ‘become the chief sowers, too’.<sup>123</sup> We might wonder if the CA—and even the wider business community—were aware of the reverend’s views, later revealed in a book by Lady Hosie, that although he believed that problems such as famine came to Chinese provinces ‘for lack of railways to bring food from elsewhere’ he also believed that the railways should ‘be handed back to full Chinese control at the end of ten years’, hardly an enthralling prospect for business interests.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Hao, *The Comprador in Nineteenth Century China*, see specifically chapter IV part four ‘The Chief Comprador Tong King-sing’.

<sup>121</sup> For Tong King-sing’s status in the Tientsin community see Carl T. Smith *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen and the Church in Hongkong* (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2005), p.220, note 3. A detailed history of his life and career is available in Kwang-ching Liu, ‘A Chinese Entrepreneur.’

<sup>122</sup> *Eleventh annual report of the Society for the Diffusion of Christian & General Knowledge among the Chinese*.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Lady Hosie, *Brave New China* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1940), p.109.



Regardless of what the CA knew of Richards' views that they continued to be wary of similar appeals is made evident by another approach made only a few years later. Again made following the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting, 1899 saw an appeal placed in front of the assembled members by the Reverend Gilbert Reid. Having established an 'International institute in Peking' with the aim of encouraging both education and the founding of friendly social relations between Chinese and foreign elites, Reid was now in the process of seeking donations to continue the project. Three months in China had seen £3,000 raised, and eight months in the U.S.A had achieved donations of £6,000. However, eight months in the United Kingdom had seen a meagre return of only £250.<sup>125</sup> It seems, then, that despite the number of returned expatriates from China present in Britain, and the mercantile links which existed between the two countries, charitable donations to encourage education with a religious foundation in China were not readily forthcoming.

Potentially, this religious element of these appeals was the key factor behind the lack of support. Missionaries and the representatives of big business had a poor relationship in China, with business blaming missionary groups for being one of the root causes of Chinese nationalism, a huge obstruction to trade. Expatriates were also disdainful of missionaries for damaging the British image in China, by travelling second class or wearing Chinese dress. Missionaries, on their part, were often shocked and disgusted by the morals displayed by the rest of the British population resident in China, especially Shanghai.<sup>126</sup> Whereas the CA and its members were sure Hongkong University would undertake the kind of technical education merchants wished to see implemented, there was no guarantee these societies would provide tuition of this sort. Such motivations, centring on the control of charitable schemes, seem to have been at play not only in the response of the CA to famine in China, but also in other educational schemes discussed later. If the CA could not be sure the scheme would benefit them, through either their own direct control or the involvement of a trusted third party, they were much less likely to give.

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<sup>125</sup> Annual General Meeting, 5 April 1899, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>126</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.94-5.

*The Education of Chinese students in Britain*

The CA was not only concerned with education in China, however, but also with appeals to encourage education of Chinese students in the United Kingdom. As with the enthusiasm shown by the committee for the founding of British universities in China, these schemes were set against the background of the international struggle for power and prestige in China. Concerned that the influence of Germany, Japan and the USA was growing due to the number of Chinese students studying in these countries, the CA sought to lend its backing to schemes to encourage similar developments in the United Kingdom.

The matter was originally raised in China by Sir John Jordan, HM Minister for Peking, in 1907, with CA involvement in the project occurring at the suggestion of Sir Walter Hillier.<sup>127</sup> Hillier had served for many years in the British Consular service in China and Korea, and was intrinsically linked to schemes of education. He himself was a Chinese scholar, and was at this time serving as the first professor of Colloquial Chinese at Kings College—a chair which the CA played no small part in founding, and which is discussed in greater depth below.<sup>128</sup> At his request a memorandum was circulated amongst the members of the Association asking for assistance. A committee was formed called the ‘Chinese Education Committee’ and though not directly under the aegis of the CA, remained very much a linked body.<sup>129</sup> Alongside members such as the professors of Chinese from Oxford and Cambridge, the principal of Kings College and the secretary to the Chinese Legation, the CA was represented by member and past president and Cecil Clementi Smith, current president R.S. Gundry and Walter Hillier himself. Correspondence was conducted through the offices of the CA, resulting finally in the production of a printed statement encouraging Chinese students to study in the United Kingdom. Prospective students were provided with a list of tutors, families and boarding establishments willing to receive them, as well as institutions prepared to offer them places. Provision of homes during vacation time could also be secured, and arrangements made that ‘Chinese Youths will be met on arrival in England and duly placed in such schools or institutions as their parents may

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<sup>127</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 4 June 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

<sup>128</sup> “Death of Sir Walter Hillier” *Times* (London, England), 11 November 1927, p.18.

<sup>129</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 2 July 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

wish them to join.’<sup>130</sup> This information was then distributed in China via the branches of the CA with all costs undertaken also paid for from the funds of the CA.<sup>131</sup> The CA continued to be involved following this, and became an intermediary to deal with companies in Shanghai who had applied to be agents for the students.<sup>132</sup>

Despite these efforts, by 1920 Britain was still struggling to attract Chinese students in comparison to other world powers.<sup>133</sup> To this end, the CA revived their interest and sought to back the ‘first practical scheme’ that had been presented to encourage Chinese students to study in the United Kingdom and afford them ‘facilities ... at least equal to those offered in America and elsewhere.’<sup>134</sup> The scheme sought a portion of the Boxer Indemnity to provide funds, and the CA agreed to lend its influence with the Foreign Office, alongside placing appeals in the press and preparing a delegation to approach the treasury. Progress, however, was slow. Still, and despite the CA becoming doubtful of any success after two years of inaction, in 1923 the Foreign Office approached the CA, and requested they put forward a proposal and information regarding the workings of the scheme.<sup>135</sup>

It was to take another eight years, until 1931, before a scheme finally came to fruition, this time under the auspices of a joint CA and FBI scheme. Funded by the Universities’ China Committee—itsself funded using a portion of the Boxer indemnity—a scheme was set up to encourage technical students from China to study in Britain. Under the scheme a £500 Per annum grant was used to fund the studies of 8 Chinese technical students, all of whom received a reduced rate of passage to England (a gift of involved steamship companies), though only half received a living allowance from the fund.<sup>136</sup> The first Chinese students to benefit from this fund arrived in Britain and, in early 1934, and took up positions at engineering firms in Luton,

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<sup>130</sup> “Education of Chinese Students in Eng-.” *Times* (London, England), 30 January 1908, p.14. Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 11 December 1907, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

<sup>131</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 March 1908, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> A speech made by the Chinese Minister on the subject the following year, it was noted that there were only 250 Chinese students present in Britain, compared to around 2,500 who were studying in America. See “Education and Trade” *Times* (London, England), 22 August 1921, p.10.

<sup>134</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 7 December 1920, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

<sup>135</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 May 1923, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, July 1922 – October 1929, CHAS/MCP/6.

<sup>136</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 6 November 1933, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7.

Manchester, Birmingham and Newcastle.<sup>137</sup> The importance the CA attached to the success of these students is made clear from an appeal made to Association members to help ‘expand and systemize the entertainment of Chinese, more particularly Chinese students’ while they were in the United Kingdom, which received a good response from members willing to help in this matter.<sup>138</sup> As part of these efforts, a call for donations was made to members to provide donations towards the establishment of ‘China House’, which was to be maintained as a gathering point for Chinese students to allow them to meet with their compatriots for social reasons. The CA had hoped to raise enough funds to purchase a Chinese altar table for the scheme, and although some donations were received it seems the scheme fell short of its target—likely, a call to provide donations for furnishings was too niche even for members of the CA.<sup>139</sup> The Second World War, unfortunately, disrupted this scheme, by which point 58 students had undertaken an education in Britain. Some 16 remained in the country, and unable to obtain passage home due to the conflict, were offered temporary employment in Britain to ‘contribute... to our war effort.’<sup>140</sup>

To understand the interest the CA had in these schemes, we must revisit briefly the key aims of the Association. One of these had long been maintaining British predominance in China, and as noted by the CA, provision for Chinese foreign students was an area in which Britain trailed far behind America. Indeed, it is clear that efforts undertaken by the CA in matters relating to education emulated closely those of the USA, which had for some time been utilising its portion of the Boxer indemnity to fund Chinese education, both in the USA and through the foundation of a University in China.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, by emulating such schemes the CA would not be required to provide funding itself, something the Association often hesitated in doing for schemes that were not under its direct control.

Alongside this, the scheme also provided an opportunity for the establishment of direct personal relations with Chinese students. As well as the appeal to CA members to help entertain these students, official social engagements were also

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<sup>137</sup> “Chinese Students in British Workshops.” *Times* (London, England), 19 January 1934, p.7.

<sup>138</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 18 April 1934, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7

<sup>139</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 15 May 1933, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1929 – September 1937, CHAS/MCP/7

<sup>140</sup> Annual report for 1940, p.60, available at Annual Reports, 1935-42, CHAS/A/10.

<sup>141</sup> Michael H. Hunt ‘The American Remission of the Boxer Indemnity: A Reappraisal’ *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 31, 3 (1972), pp.547-559.

organized. Periodic reunion dinners were held for the students whilst they studied in Britain, which were also attended by members of the CA. Costs were covered by each member paying for his own ticket and that of a student.<sup>142</sup> To ensure that links continued with those students that had returned to China, an ‘FBI Returned Students Association’ was formed in Shanghai.<sup>143</sup> As noted in chapter three, the establishment of personal relations with Chinese partners had become an increasingly important aim of British business interests in China, and this scheme offered the potential to see this extended through the creation of new contacts, which in the long run sought to protect British trade interests in China by promoting ‘cultural diplomacy objectives’.<sup>144</sup>

Despite this, these schemes, overall, were only of limited success. In part, this was down to the source of funding chosen. The British portion of the Boxer indemnity was only allocated after a long period of deliberation by the British government, leading to tortuously slow progress, and the amount ultimately granted by the China Universities Committee to the joint CA and FBI scheme was small. Although the scheme was relatively long lived, continuing from the first arrival of students in 1934 until at least 1949, it attracted far fewer students than similar American efforts which saw 5,700 students study in the country between 1925 and 1931.<sup>145</sup> However, the scheme did bring Chinese students to Britain, to learn the types of modern technical skills that British Businesses, hoping to modernise China, would require. To what level we can view the scheme as benevolent—funded by Chinese finance, albeit the Boxer indemnity, to run a scheme that ultimately aimed to stunt the spread of Chinese nationalism and retain British primacy in trade—is questionable; the scheme is perhaps best viewed as part of the CA’s wider commercial and political goals, though it falls in this section of the thesis, ultimately, due to its educational nature. In doing so, however, it highlights how the CA’s primary object to encourage trade permeated many of its other schemes and developments.

Although this scheme was limited in scope, it again also clearly shows that it was a specific group within the CA—committee men and member firms—who were

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<sup>142</sup> E.M. Gull, Secretary to members of the General Committee, 24 May 1939, General Committee Papers, March 1938 – June 1939, CHAS/MCP/42, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>143</sup> Annual report for 1940, p.60, available at Annual Reports, 1935-42, CHAS/A/10.

<sup>144</sup> Bickers, *Out of China*, p.257.

<sup>145</sup> The final mention of the scheme in the China Association records is to be found in the Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 4 February 1949, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1949, CHAS/MCP/49. For the greater scale of schemes undertaken by the USA, see Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.145.

the motivation behind such educational endeavours. And it was this group who were the driving force behind the longest running scheme—educational or otherwise—that the CA developed. Originating within the CA and funded solely by the body and its members, it focused upon providing Chinese language education in Britain. The history and outcome of this commitment goes some way to challenging the view that has been espoused that ‘learning Chinese was probably restricted to missionaries, scholars, government officials and a few eccentrics until World War II.’<sup>146</sup>

### **The China Association’s School of Practical Chinese and the foundation of the School of Oriental and African Studies**

At the 1901 annual dinner of the CA, Mr. Byron Brenan, recently returned to Britain after 30 years of government service in East Asia, undertook a reminiscence of the type that so often came to dominate these occasions.<sup>147</sup> A former consul of HM government, he recalled a journey from his base of employment early in his career to the seat of the Chinese government in Peking, accompanied by an anonymous CA member present that evening. In the ‘days before the railway’ the journey of around 80 miles necessitated an overnight stop at the ‘half-way house.’<sup>148</sup> Having failed to engage a translator before departure, it became necessary that ‘one who had learned Chinese at home’—the anonymous companion—‘volunteered to translate.’ After a protracted struggle to request a breakfast for the next morning, the hapless translator ‘was reduced to drawing a Chicken on the wall of the house.’ Despite these efforts, Brenan recalled to the amusement of the assembled guests, ‘Next morning no breakfast could be obtained until he had drawn underneath [the chicken] the representation of the egg that was wanted.’<sup>149</sup> Although this anecdote was entertaining to the assembled guests at the dinner it nonetheless hinted at serious problems. If a member of the British government service could not order breakfast in Chinese, he certainly could not discuss anything of importance, except through a translator.

While men of the consular service might remedy this position as their careers continued, as Brenan certainly did, for commercial employees the situation was even

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<sup>146</sup> Daniel Kane, *The Chinese Language: Its History and Current Usage* (Tuttle Publishing, 2006), p.17.

<sup>147</sup> “China Will Become a Second Turkey” *Southland Times* (Invercargill) 7 October 1901, p.2.

<sup>148</sup> Distance drawn from *The Chronicle and Directory for China, Japan and the Philippines* for the year 1879 (Hongkong: Daily Press Office, 1879), p. 352.

<sup>149</sup> Annual Dinner, 11 November 1901, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

worse.<sup>150</sup> Whilst this status quo continued, chances of conducting business in person with Chinese remained severely limited. Improved personal relations with Chinese employees or partners were also very unlikely whilst direct communication was impossible. This ultimately meant continued reliance on Compradors—sometimes simply Chinese middlemen, sometimes entrepreneurs, managers, and very much partners of British firms—who by their very role, regardless of its size, reduced profits and had in several recorded cases simply absconded with funds given to them to conduct business deals.<sup>151</sup> Indeed, a memorandum issued by the CA on the need for language tuition made reference to a report produced by F.S.A. Bourne of the consular service and reprinted by the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce which stated the belief that compradors ‘certainly made [at least] as much’ profit as British firms on imports into China. Furthermore, the report stated Bourne’s belief that these compradors and ‘the likin officials in Canton’ were choosing to ‘combine against the British merchants and the Chinese consumer, and [doing] remarkably well.’ Unable to speak Chinese, Bourne argued, British merchants were left ‘absolutely in the dark about all this.’<sup>152</sup>

Regardless of the accuracy of Bourne’s suspicions of collusion, for British business in China it was becoming clear that business relationships and procedures had to change. Equally, however, it quickly became apparent that there was no pool of employees with knowledge of the Chinese language upon which to draw. Particularly striking is the case of HSBC employee Guy Hillier, who was elevated to the position of manager in its Peking branch at least in part due to his exceptional command of the Chinese language. The Peking branch of the bank was key due to its position at the seat of the Chinese government, with whom the HSBC were in the process of negotiating large loans to fund railways and other modernisation projects.

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<sup>150</sup> As noted later in this chapter, Byron Brenan was later regarded as something of a scholar of the Chinese language, suggesting that he had, at least, remedied this defect himself by his later career. Certainly, by 1907 he was able to translate a paper given by The Chinese Minister to the China Society in London for those present, see J.C.F. ‘The China Society’ *Journal of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Shanghai, China, Vol. XXXVIII, 1907), p.226. For a discussion of the language skills of the British consular service—skills that were, certainly, not always up to the level that was required, and even declined in the twentieth century as more Chinese learned English—see Coates, *The China Consuls*, pp.80-86, p.162 and pp.448-9.

<sup>151</sup> Bickers, *Britain in China*, p.182, Hao, *Comprador in Nineteenth Century China*, chapter IV ‘Functions of the Comprador in the Foreign Firm’.

<sup>152</sup> The original memorandum is, unfortunately, not held in the archives of the school. However, its key points were reported upon in the “Teaching of Chinese.” *Morning Post* (London, England), 8 July 1899. F.S.A Bourne’s report survives, and is reprinted in the *Report of the Mission to China of the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce, 1896-7* (The North East Lancashire Press Company, Blackburn, 1898) (available online at <https://archive.org/details/reportmissionto00commgoog>, last accessed 6th March 2017). For the passages quoted see pp.142-4.

The scarcity of men like Hillier, with a good command of the Chinese language, is highlighted by the events of 1896. In that year, Hillier tendered his resignation on account of his failing sight, but the HSBC refused to accept his offer. With a total loss of sight occurring in 1907, Hillier became known as ‘the blind banker of Peking’ and testament to his personal strength continued to work ‘indefatigably.’<sup>153</sup> Ultimately he had no other option, as no one with a command of the language good enough to carry out negotiations with Chinese officials in person could be found to replace him. Despite his loss of sight he held the post until his death in 1924, following 39 years of service at the HSBC’s Peking branch, remembered by contemporaries as ‘the most remarkable of the by no means few remarkable men who have served the bank.’<sup>154</sup>

Traditionally, such a lack of language skills had not been seen as a major problem. With British interests confined to a few treaty ports translators could be found when required, or middlemen employed. But in Peking, and when dealing directly with the Chinese government, this was not an option. Nor would it be an option if, as the CA hoped, the interior of China could be opened to British business interests as they too backed the railway development that seemed poised, at the turn of the century, to make this a reality.<sup>155</sup>

Such problems, however, are largely absent from the historical record. Recent work by Ian Brown even argues that ‘colonial administrators’ and ‘commercial men’ had, by the early twentieth century, long had their Asian and African language tuition needs met by such institutions as University College and Kings College, London, which in 1836 and 1846 respectively founded chairs of Chinese.<sup>156</sup> Brown, however, fails to account for the forms of language taught by these institutions, and perhaps overestimates the standard of tuition provided. The chairs were often unfilled, founded as a condition that came with of a sizeable bequest of Chinese works and allowed to lapse when original incumbents left the post, or filled by men of questionable talents

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<sup>153</sup> Davis ‘Financing Imperialism’, p.246.

<sup>154</sup> Frank H. H. King, ‘Hillier, Edward Guy (1857–1924)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38335>, last accessed 23 August 2016). For Hillier’s rejected resignation see *The HSBC Group: Our Story* (HSBC Holdings PLC, 2013), p.8, (available online at <http://www.hsbc.com/~media/hsbc-com/about-hsbc/history/pdfs/140113-hsbc-our-story>, last accessed 22 October 2017); Collis, *Wayfoong: The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation*, pp. 164-6.

<sup>155</sup> The CA’s interest in railway development is not given prominent focus in this thesis. However, it was discussed in the Associations annual reports for 1895-96, 99, 1900, 1903-17, 1921, 1923-7, 29, 1931 and 1933-6.

<sup>156</sup> Ian Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies: Imperial Training and the Expansion of Learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p.8 and p.35.



or whose aims offered little help to commerce.<sup>157</sup> As late as 1890, for example, the incumbent of the Chair of Chinese at University College, London, remarked that although the modern Chinese language was ‘colloquially intelligible’ the professor instead chose to focus upon the study of ‘classical’ Chinese—something of little use as modern Chinese was the variant required for the majority of businessmen and colonial administrators.<sup>158</sup> And when a chair of Chinese had been established at Cambridge in 1886, the incumbent professor in 1888 had stressed to prospective students that although he could provide ‘hints’ his best advice to applicants—should there be any—was that they should ‘make their way to China with all speed’ if they wished to succeed in learning the language.<sup>159</sup> This was, of course, an option for some—most notably government employees—with student interpreters trained at the legation in Peking.<sup>160</sup> Ultimately the first occupant chair of Chinese at Cambridge—CA founding member Thomas Wade—did not teach any students at all before his death in 1895.<sup>161</sup> Even his successor, Herbert Giles, as late as 1909, found that he only had ‘one student at Cambridge who really wished to learn the language for its own sake’ rather than being forced to do so for career needs, and further found that funding would not stretch to a native assistant to support tuition.<sup>162</sup>

Compared to efforts in France, which had seen the French School of Oriental studies curriculum designed specifically to meet the needs of commerce in the late 1880’s, a lack of concerted effort in Britain was seen to be jeopardising British commercial predominance in China.<sup>163</sup> This built on wider French efforts, which had seen them ‘prosecuting their researches [into the Chinese language] with diligence and success’ from at least the early eighteenth century.<sup>164</sup> Similarly, in the USA, and perhaps spurred on by the high numbers of Chinese migrants it had received, Yale

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<sup>157</sup> For a study of some of the nineteenth century efforts made in Britain see T.H. Barrett, *Singular Listlessness: A Short History of Chinese Books and British Scholars* (London: Wellsweep Press, 1989), specifically chapters ‘Chinese studies in nineteenth century London’ and ‘The late nineteenth century’.

<sup>158</sup> “China and the Language of China.” *Times* (London, England), 15 October 1890, p.7.

<sup>159</sup> “University Intelligence.” *Times* (London, England), 14 June 1888, p.6.

<sup>160</sup> Hoare, *Embassies in the East*, p.24 notes that as of 1867, there were eight student interpreters present in Peking, with another five ‘on the way.’ Their studies took two years, with language tuition mixed with helping with general ‘mundane’ tasks in the legation.

<sup>161</sup> Ven, ‘Wade, Sir Thomas Francis (1818–1895)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. For his death see “Sir Thomas Wade.” *Times* (London, England), 2 August 1895, p.3.

<sup>162</sup> Barrett, *Singular Listlessness*, p.85

<sup>163</sup> “French Merchants and Oriental Languages.” *Times* (London, England), 7 September 1887, p.5.

<sup>164</sup> J.F. Davis, *Chinese Novels, Translated from the Originals* (London, 1822), pp.1-2.

University opened a Chinese language seminar as early as 1876. The seminars founder, Samuel Wells Williams hoped

That the study of Chinese will receive more attention than it has done... The merchant and the traveller, as well as the philologist and missionary, should attend to it... we hazard little in saying, that had this been done, most of the ill-will between foreigners and natives... would have been avoided.<sup>165</sup>

By 1914, six more US universities offered Chinese seminars, and by 1930, 60 Chinese language courses were available in the country.<sup>166</sup> Nor were British concerns limited to commerce, or to China, as declinist discourses began to appear on a wide scale.<sup>167</sup> A Royal Commission of 1884 on technical instruction had warned that ‘Our industrial Empire is vigorously attacked all over the world. We find that our most formidable assailants are the best educated peoples.’<sup>168</sup>

It was against this background of international competition, but also due to a lack of interest from universities, that F.S.A. Bourne suggested, in his report, that ‘the work [to improve trade] must be done by rich firms or corporations able to wait and train in the Chinese spoken language and mercantile customs, youths selected in England for their business capacity.’<sup>169</sup> First published in 1888, his calls were not responded to until 1897, the year after Guy Hillier had tendered his resignation to the HSBC, although whether this was linked or simply a coincidence remains a mystery. Chairman of the CA William Keswick in this year notified members that a scheme was being formulated for ‘teaching young fellows Chinese before they went East’ under the ‘aegis of some scholastic institution—possibly the London University.’ Specifically, Keswick noted the wider fears of the CA and British commercial community that British predominance in China was being undermined by innovative moves of other European Powers. It was envisaged that the school curriculum would focus upon offering education in practical, rather than the classical form, of the Chinese language. Keswick assured members that this would be achieved by the use

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<sup>165</sup> Ying Li ‘History of Chinese Language Education and the Development of Textbooks in the United States’ *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* (January, 2015), p.76.

<sup>166</sup> Li ‘History of Chinese Language Education’ p.76.

<sup>167</sup> For an introduction to British ‘Declinism’ and its recurrence as Historical theory, which first developed seriously in response to American and German competition in the 1880’s, see Jim Tomlinson, ‘Thrice Denied: ‘Declinism’ as a Recurrent Theme in British History in the Long Twentieth Century’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 20, 2 (2009), pp.227-51.

<sup>168</sup> Quoted in Lawson and Silver, *A Social History of Education in England*, p.346.

<sup>169</sup> Report of the Mission to China of the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce, 1896-7, p.150.

of ‘efficient Chinese teachers—not relics of the past, but active men’ brought directly from China to lead the scheme.<sup>170</sup>

Two years later, the school became operational, and, in 1899, a memorandum was sent to the Foreign Office and upon an expression of full backing for the scheme Mr George Brown, formerly of HM’s consular service, was dispatched to China to secure the services of two teachers. Funding of £500 per annum had been guaranteed for five years by 13 members and member firms of the CA, shown in table 4.1, alongside a lump sum of £600 donated by prominent Association member R.S. Gundry.<sup>171</sup> Also notable is the source of the large donation, of £100 P.A., from the HSBC who had so recently struggled, and ultimately failed, to find an able replacement for Guy Hillier. Upon Mr Brown’s return, teaching commenced in rented rooms. Applications for the school were ‘numerous’, and by late 1900 some 12 students were enrolled.<sup>172</sup> Reports of the school’s foundation were widespread, appearing in newspapers in Aberdeen, Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield, Leicester and London.<sup>173</sup>

These donations offer the first insight into why the CA was well placed to lead the scheme. In order to be a success, the scheme required substantial funding, and a single firm providing this for an in-house language school may not have seen a viable return upon their investment. By bringing together a series of firms through the CA, through which they had by this point a solid history of co-operation, the scheme was rendered cost effective, and ensured that should it prove a failure no single firm would lose an uncomfortable amount. By sharing these costs—as was done when providing a pension for CA members—and ensuring donations were made public, the firms also ensured that all competitors who wished to utilise this language tuition scheme had contributed in some format. As mentioned above, such cooperation is key when attempting to remove the possibility of ‘free-riders’ hijacking the philanthropic

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<sup>170</sup> Annual General Meeting, 9 March 1897, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committees, April 1889 – March 1897, CHAS/MCP/1.

<sup>171</sup> Annual report for 1900, Appendix F pp.69-76, available at Annual Reports, 1898-03, CHAS/A/03.

<sup>172</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 29 November 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>173</sup> “Chinese Schools in England” *Aberdeen Journal* (Aberdeen, Scotland), 21 February 1900 “Literary and Miscellaneous Extracts” *Leicester Chronicle* (Leicester, England), 24 February 1900. “Literary and Miscellaneous Extracts” *Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland), 26 February 1900. “From Our London Correspondent” *Leeds Mercury* (Leeds, England), 5 Jul 1900 “The Top of the Morning” *Pall Mall Gazette* (London, England), 5 Jul. 1900. “Multiple News Items” *Sheffield Independent* (Sheffield, England), 6 Jul. 1900.

**Table 4.1:** Original subscribers to the China Association School of Practical Chinese  
source: China Association, annual report 1900

Subscribers to the C.A. teaching scheme	Amount subscribed per annum (£.s.d.)
Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation	100.0.0
Messrs. John Swire & Sons	50.0.0
Messrs. Jardine Matheson & Co.	50.0.0
Messrs. Ilbert & Co.	50.0.0
The Pekin Syndicate	50.0.0
Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China	50.0.0
R.A. Yerburch, Esq. M.P.	50.0.0
H. Harrison, Esq.	50.0.0
Sir Alfred Dent	10.10.0
W.S. Young Esq.	10.0.0
Messrs. Reiss Bros.	10.0.0
George Cawston, Esq.	10.0.0
Messrs. Dodwell & Co.	5.0.0
Total Yearly Subscription	£495.10.-

donations of another company for their own personal gain.<sup>174</sup> Had a single firm created a language school, this could feasibly further proved problematic in two ways. First, other companies could have sent students to the school exploiting the benevolent gesture of the firm. Secondly, the employees they had trained would have become valuable assets and had another firm offered them better terms of employment this could have destroyed the inter-firm trust and co-operation the CA desired. Both of these would have damaged the social capital all of the firms involved in the CA had previously accrued. Control of the school was also shared when placing it under CA leadership, further ensuring that the curriculum would not unfairly favour one firms needs over another. All of these reasons offer potential explanations as to why a co-operative scheme under a third party was more appealing to the CA membership firms than undertaking such a move alone.

The next challenge following foundation was to secure legitimacy and a permanent base of operations. A series of delays caused setbacks, with the CA

<sup>174</sup> Porter and Kramer, 'The Competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy', p.11.

unwilling to grant total control to Kings College, the school's proposed home, mirroring concerns over control exhibited in charitable collections.<sup>175</sup> Why Kings College was chosen, we can only speculate, but a combination of its location—close to the City of London—a dislike of old establishments such as Cambridge and Oxford, from which Owen has argued those who had built new commercial fortunes felt socially excluded, and even the need of Kings College to raise funding to secure its own existence may have played a part.<sup>176</sup> Eventually, negotiations saw a satisfactory conclusion reached and on 22 June 1904, Kings College announced the amalgamation of the Practical School of Chinese with its own department of Chinese. A professorship of documentary and colloquial Chinese, to serve concurrently with the current professor of Literary Chinese was founded and Sir Walter Hillier, former diplomat, CA member, and Chinese scholar was appointed to the new role.<sup>177</sup> Hillier held this position until his retirement in 1908, though his influence continued, with his textbook remaining the key introductory text for students until at least 1910.<sup>178</sup> A decision was also taken to overhaul the school management, and to place it under the control of a new committee headed by J.H. Gwyther of the Chartered Bank.<sup>179</sup>

Hopes for the school were high at this juncture. Charles Addis of the HSBC wrote to Shanghai branch manager Ewen Cameron to espouse its value. He thought it valuable to have men who could interpret, and 'more important, who are capable of checking the interpretation of others', recalling earlier fears of untrustworthy compradors. These needs would be compounded, he noted, as the bank tried to extend into the interior of China. Addis also stressed that the new appointment of Walter Hillier had risen his hopes. He noted of the previous Kings College professor that

Douglas's interests were almost entirely classical and it is doubtful if he could have taught commercial Chinese even if he tried. That is all changed now. The present teacher, Sir Walter Hillier, is a thoroughly practical man and, after a full discussion of the subject with him, any doubt I entertained as to the practicability of combining Chinese and Banking have been largely removed.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 24 July 1900, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, April 1897 – May 1901, CHAS/MCP/2.

<sup>176</sup> For both of these matters, see Owen, *English Philanthropy*, pp.361-363.

<sup>177</sup> "University Intelligence." *Times* (London, England), 24 June 1904, p.10.

<sup>178</sup> Annual report for 1910, supplement pp.42-6, available at Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06; "Death of Sir Walter Hillier" *Times* (London, England), 11 November 1927, p.18.

<sup>179</sup> China Association, Annual Meeting, 1904, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, June 1901 – November 1906, CHAS/MCP/3.

<sup>180</sup> C.S. Addis to Ewen Cameron, 18 November 1904, Business Papers, PP MS 14/012/0352, Papers of Sir Charles Stewart Addis, SOAS Library, University of London.

Indeed, Addis believed Hillier's skill to be a key reason for encouraging study in London rather than China, with his 'exceptional teaching ability... compared with that of the ordinary Chinese pundit' improving students chances of success. Furthermore, he believed the classes would allow the identification of employees with no natural talent for languages, and therefore no hope of acquiring Chinese language skills, without the costs of sending them to China.<sup>181</sup>

### *Incorporation of the School*

By 1908, the school itself had become well established. It had proved a 'success from its commencement' and 'had done great good' working in a role alongside the chair of classical Chinese at Kings College. Yet the dispute over control had caused reluctance on the part of the backers of the scheme to provide a proper endowment fund, instead choosing to fund the chair by yearly subscriptions. With the retirement of the incumbent professor of Classical Chinese, however, an opportunity emerged to combine the two posts. The new combined chair was to remain primarily focused upon the teaching of practical Chinese, and was to be ensured of continued long term funding by the creation of an endowment fund placed under an incorporated company, to avoid problems upon the death of trustees. As such, 1909 saw the incorporation under the companies act of 'The China Association's Incorporated School of Practical Chinese.'<sup>182</sup> Such endowments, it seems, were in vogue at this time, with Cambridge University creating a chair of German language in the same year, its first backed by an endowment provided by a business firm—in that case, the banking house of J. Henry Schroder & Co.<sup>183</sup>

A list of the original subscribers show that not only were senior members of China firms prepared to back the school with substantial sums, but that many of the premier firms involved in the China trade remained willing to co-operate to ensure the continuation of the school. The donations themselves, and their sources, are outlined in table. 4.2. Privileges to nominate students for free, or reduced fees, were granted to

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Annual General Meeting, 1908, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, December 1906 – November 1910, CHAS/MCP/4.

<sup>183</sup> Owen, *English Philanthropy*, p.353.

**Table 4.2: Contributions to the China Association School of Chinese Endowment Fund**

source: annual report of the China Association, 1909

Contributors to the CA school endowment fund	Contribution
W. Keswick (Representing Jardine Matheson)	Shares to the Value of £4,000
Taikoo Sugar (Subsidiary of Swires)	£1,000
The HSBC	£1,000
Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China	£1,000
R.S. Gundry	£850
John Swire and Sons	£550
H. Harrison (Chairman of the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce) <sup>184</sup>	£100
Mrs Gamwell <sup>185</sup>	£50
Previous School fund Surplus	£600
Yearly Subscriptions (total) <sup>186</sup>	£100 p.a.
Total Endowment Fund	£9150 (plus £100 p.a.)

the most generous donors.<sup>187</sup> Further amounts contributed in the form of yearly subscriptions were used to cover the immediate running costs of the school. In total

<sup>184</sup> Teaching of Chinese.” *Morning Post* (London, England), 8 July 1899.

<sup>185</sup> Investigation into the exact sources of funding highlights the problems that can be inherit in determining who exactly donated. Two separate documents show the list of those who had ‘promised’ to give funds in March of 1909—The first in the Minutes of the first meeting of the committee of management, 23 March 1909, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03—and the final list of subscriptions advertised in *The Times* in October and reprinted in the annual report for 1909, appendix p.117, available at Annual Reports, 1906-10, CHAS/A/05. In the first, JH Scott (of John Swire and Sons) was to have subscribed £1650. However, his name is completely absent from the final list. Instead, his donation is made in the name of John Swire and Sons (£550), the Taikoo Sugar Refining Co. (A Swire owned concern, £1,000) and potentially Mrs Gamwell (Mr Gamwell was a founding member of the China Association, and a partner of Swire and Sons, see Hook, *A Guide to the Papers of John Swire and Sons Limited* .

<sup>186</sup> Yearly subscriptions were provided by [unreadable] (£50 P.A.), Cawston & co. (£10 P.A.), Gilman and Co (£10 P.A.), Reiss Bros (£10 P.A.), Dodwell and Co., (£10 P.A.) and Sir Alfred Dent (£10 P.A.), see the Minutes of the first meeting of the committee of management, 23 March 1909, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>187</sup> G. Jamieson, Hon. Secretary to W. Keswick, 18 November 1909, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London, notes W. Keswick was granted the right to nominate 5 pupils for free tuition, and 5 for tuition at reduces fees, a right that was continue for not only his life, but was to pass to his son Henry Keswick for the duration of his life too. The Minutes of the first meeting of the committee of management, 23 March 1909, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03 note that other Banks and firms which contributed £1000 were entitled to nominate one student for free, and another at a reduced fee.

this provided the school with an impressive endowment fund of around £9000, with a further £100 provided yearly by subscriptions.

By this point in its history, many of the major China firms of the period were involved in the scheme, as were two major East Asian banks. A sum of £30 per annum was soon donated to the running costs of the school by the Colonial Office, which although of small size is notable as the Colonial Office typically did not support such schemes, instead preferring employees to receive tuition directly once overseas.<sup>188</sup>

### *The Foundation of the School of Oriental Studies*

The final major stage in the development of the CA School of Practical Chinese came with the integration of the school as part of the wider scheme to create an academic School of Oriental Studies [SOS] in London. This government scheme was set against a background of changing opinions regarding the provision of education. The 1902 education act had, for the first time, provided state funding for secondary education, and local education authorities had been established with substantial powers, to act ‘as partners in worthwhile voluntary initiatives.’<sup>189</sup> Similarly, the British government had now reached the conclusion that had been reached by the CA, the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce Report, and *The Times* some years before, that without a concerted effort to improve language skills, British predominance in the East, and therefore the British Empire, was at stake.<sup>190</sup>

This realisation resulted in the production of the *Reay Report*, which was the outcome of an inquiry in 1909 to ‘consider the organisation of oriental studies in London.’ What was found was not promising. The report could only agree that, as had been pointed out in a 1906 memorial to Prime Minister Henry Campbell-Bannerman,

There is no properly organised School providing instruction in Oriental languages. The efficient teaching which is given is due to the efforts of scattered colleges and societies, whose finances are heavily burdened by other charges, with the result that in almost every case the teachers, whose merits are generally recognised, are inadequately paid, and hence are unable to give more than a small portion of their time to the teaching of their subjects. The number of students who avail themselves of the existing

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<sup>188</sup> Report of the Committee of Management for 1909-10, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03. For the preference of the Colonial Office see Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies*, p.9 and pp.31-2.

<sup>189</sup> Lawrence Goldman, *Dons and Workers: Oxford and Adult Education since 1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p.114; Owen, *English Philanthropy*, pp.273-5.

<sup>190</sup> Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies*, pp.7-12.



facilities is very limited and would be largely increased if due recognition were given to these studies.<sup>191</sup>

Further testimony in the report would stress the need of tuition to improve commercial prospects, and was given by both William Keswick and C.S. Addis of the CA. Both, of course, could look for inspiration to the CA's Chinese language school.<sup>192</sup> Indeed, of the 'colleges and societies' supporting earlier schemes, the CA scheme seems to have been the standout example. Contemporary articles rated it as the only department which could boast self-sufficiency through an endowment fund.<sup>193</sup> Later, when the SOS scheme later sought to receive backing from a Mansion House fund it was suggested that if the new school could be placed upon the foundations of both the endowment fund provided for the CA's School of Practical Chinese and also its reputation as a successful centre for teaching the Chinese language, there would be a greater chance of success.<sup>194</sup> Figures provided within the *Reay Report* attest to this clearly. Walter Hillier earned a salary of £211.16.4. for his work in 1906-7 as professor of the CA school, and the native assistant at the school some £144.0.0. No professor teaching another oriental language at Kings College received more than £109.15.4., and at none at University College, London, received a salary greater than £110.0.0.<sup>195</sup> Student numbers are similarly striking. Although Hebrew studies received 62 students at Kings College, Chinese was comfortably second with 30 enrolled. Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Modern Greek, Russian, Japanese, Malay, Hausa, Swahili and Zulu classes received only 11 students combined. University College had 32 language students, but these were spread across departments of Sanskrit, Hebrew, Tibetan, Arabic, Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Maratha and Burmese.<sup>196</sup> Returning to Ian Brown's recent work, we find the involvement of the CA, and wider Chinese firms behind it, again, largely missed. Indeed, Brown only makes reference to CA representatives attending one meeting about the foundation of the school, and notes China-related firms the HSBC, John Swire and Sons, the Chartered Bank of India and

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<sup>191</sup> Treasury Committee on the Organisation of Oriental Studies in London, *Report of the Committee appointed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to consider the Organisation of Oriental Studies in London* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1909), p.2 (hereafter referred to as *The Reay Report*).

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., p.14, for Addis memorandum on the matter see p.44.

<sup>193</sup> 'London School of Oriental Studies' *Journal of the African Society*, 13, 52 (1914), p.423.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> One lecturer in the Oriental department of University College was paid £200.0.0, but this was to teach the History of India. For this and all other figures see *The Reay Report*, pp.65-6.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

China and Alfred Holt and Company providing a ‘modest’ contribution to an appeal for funds, not noting their contribution through earlier schemes.<sup>197</sup>

The SOS scheme was first brought to the attention of the CA general committee in 1914, the chairman noting that a committee had been founded in the City of London to raise funds to this end, and had requested the backing of the CA.<sup>198</sup> After being assured that the teaching of colloquial Mandarin Chinese would ‘always be carried on as an essential branch of study’ and that a place on the Governing board of the SOS would be reserved for an elected member of the CA, the move was approved by the CA General Committee. On 31 December 1916, the CA school of Practical Chinese ceased teaching at Kings College, and relocated to the newly formed SOS.

Following this relocation, little altered immediately. School staff remained the same, and commercial students formed the majority of attendees, as noted below. However as time progressed the influence of the CA within SOS decreased. Why exactly this was the case is unclear, but a number of developments are suggestive of at least some of the potential reasons. Changes in the curriculum of the school and the types of student attending—both of which will be discussed later—suggest the SOS developed to become a much wider body than the CA envisaged, and a much larger body than they could attempt to influence. It began to pursue a wider academic base of study, leaving the aims of commercial firms behind. On a more practical note, over time the endowment fund of the CA became devalued. This led to decreased funding, and perhaps with it decreased influence.

By the 1930s the CA had become clearly separated from the School. A loss of interest was typified by the events of a meeting of 1932. When questioned by the CA secretary what teaching was provided with the funds they donated, the representative of the CA on the SOS board of Governance admitted he did not know. He did not observe any classes as he could not speak Chinese. The representative reminded the CA committee that he was simply elected to this post, and had little interest in the school. Previously, he added, the CA had been represented by Mr. Byron Brenan and George Jamieson, Chinese scholars who were much more likely to oversee the

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<sup>197</sup> Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies*, p.12 and p.25.

<sup>198</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, 17 February 1914, Minutes of the General Committee and Executive Committee, January 1911 – April 1922, CHAS/MCP/5.

proceedings of the school, and understand what was being taught.<sup>199</sup> A meeting was held in 1935 to debate whether the current professor, Sir Reginald Johnston was fit for purpose, showing continued concern over how the CA's financial support was spent.<sup>200</sup> But by 1941 a stark reminder of the lack of CA influence came when the efforts of the CA to place a member on the board of Governors were met with confusion from the SOAS, who, unfamiliar with the promises made to the CA at the inception of the body, failed to invite a CA representative to serve.<sup>201</sup> The same year the annual report of the school told CA members that the school was now simply a department of the wider SOAS Far Eastern Department.<sup>202</sup> By 1946 had the CA realised that their contributions to SOAS had been marginalised by the recent increases in funding to the institution, and although the CA continued to provide funding of £250 P.A. until 1951 by this point commercial attendance at the school had ceased with the closure of China to foreign business firms, and the details included in the annual report of the CA were limited to scant information on attendance numbers and financial details of the still extant endowment fund.<sup>203</sup>

A final effort to ensure the usefulness of the endowment came in 1952, with the grant to the SOAS stopped and alternative arrangements investigated.<sup>204</sup> Of several suggestions, the CA chose to create a scholarship post at the SOAS using the fund, which continued until 1965, and was awarded to students studying practical Chinese.<sup>205</sup> By 1966 the financial return provided by the endowment fund was no

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<sup>199</sup> Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the China Association's Incorporated School of Practical Chinese, 17 February 1932, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>200</sup> Robert A. Bickers, "Coolie Work": Sir Reginald Johnston at the School of Oriental Studies, 1931-1937', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Third Series*, 5, 3 (1995), p.395.

<sup>201</sup> Annual meeting of the China Association's Incorporated School of Practical Chinese, 27 May 1941, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03. The School had changed its name as of 1938, adopting African alongside Oriental studies in its title. See *History of SOAS, University of London* (available online at <https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/history/>, last accessed 6 April 2018)

<sup>202</sup> Annual Report for the Session 1939-40, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>203</sup> Annual Report for the Session 1946-7, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03; Annual Report for the Session 1950-1, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>204</sup> G.E. Mitchell, Secretary, to members of the General Committee, 30 December 1952, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1952, CHAS/MCP/50B.

<sup>205</sup> Circular to General Committee, 28 October 1954, Minutes and Circulars of the General Committee and Executive Committee, 1954, CHAS/MCP/50D.

longer sufficient to provide for this purpose, and although 1967 saw a bursary of £99 provided the scheme was, by this point, a shadow of its former self.<sup>206</sup>

### *School curriculum*

Our first insight into teaching at the school comes with incorporation of the School and the combination of the chairs of practical and classical Chinese at Kings College. Training for commercial students was well provisioned. Students were helped by the professor through a study of *The Chinese language and How to Learn it: A manual for Beginners*, a textbook penned by Sir Walter Hillier. This text promised to give the reader enough understanding of the Chinese language to ‘make his ordinary wants known’ with an hour of practice per day for six months.<sup>207</sup> This was followed by a weekly translation exercise from English into Chinese, and an optional, though well attended, conversation class. Due to the status of the professorship as a combined chair of Chinese it was also necessary to provide more advanced tuition. *Hirth’s documentary Chinese* was studied, alongside sections of Chinese classics including the *Great Learning* and *Constant Mean*, whilst under the Assistant professor classes involved a study of the novel *The Fortunate Union*.<sup>208</sup>

Although tuition was comprehensive at this point this combination of chairs was to mark the start of a protracted struggle to continue the teaching of practical Chinese in what became an increasingly academic setting. This is not to say, however, that efforts to do so did not continue. Occasional lecturers were employed to teach dialects of particular importance to commercial interests, including provision in Cantonese to support banking interests.<sup>209</sup> Intensive courses were trialled, including one purely for employees of BAT in 1928—taught, at an early stage of his career, by prominent Chinese novelist and dramatist Lao She—and one for two students in 1936.<sup>210</sup> Though these showed promising results, they did not become a permanent

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<sup>206</sup> For the amounts granted by the scholarship see annual reports from 1955-67, available at Annual Reports, 1953-57, CHAS/A/11; Annual Reports, 1957-62, CHAS/A/12; Annual Report 1962-3, 63-4, 64-5, 65-6, CHAS/A/23-26. Unfortunately no copy of the 1966-7 report is publically available.

<sup>207</sup> Walter Hillier, *The Chinese Language and How to Learn It: A Manual For Beginners* (Sixth Edition, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1921), p.vii.

<sup>208</sup> Annual Report for 1912, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>209</sup> Annual Report for 1928, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.; Annual report for 1936, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03. Robert Bickers, ‘New Light on Lao She, London, and the London Missionary Society, 1921-1929’ *Modern Chinese Literature*, 8 (1994), pp.31-2.

feature. A commercial certificate showing proficiency in Chinese was introduced, to give students a clear goal to work towards, and even in 1946, at the very end of British commercial involvement in China, a new course to teach practical Chinese, including a course on Chinese law, was introduced—though it attracted no interest. Ultimately, these innovations were sporadic, and uncoordinated, and no long-term plan existed to develop the teaching of basic Chinese for commercial purposes.<sup>211</sup>

As education for commercial purposes began to struggle the academic side of the school started to flourish. 1927 saw, for the first time, two Chinese students reading for a PhD and another towards an arts degree.<sup>212</sup> The following year five students were working towards University degrees, with a further four engaged in literary study, while, in 1930, there was dedicated study by students in Chinese History, Religion and Philosophy.<sup>213</sup> By 1933, attendees included a PhD student from Vienna writing on the early culture of China, and others taking courses in Chinese History, T'ang dynasty poetry, and advanced classical Chinese—although elementary Chinese did remain on the curriculum.<sup>214</sup> It was in this year that numbers of educational students tied those of commercial students for the first time, before exceeding them in 1936, as seen in Figure 4.1.<sup>215</sup>

The report of 1935 presents a stark picture of the struggles over direction the school was facing. As these academic achievements grew, it seems a conscious decision was taken to reduce provision for commercial students, despite the success of four BAT employees who had achieved excellent progress. Tuition in basic Chinese was no longer to be provided by the incumbent professor. Instead, it was provided by a senior student with the aid of a gramophone course, voiced by Lao She, and a two

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<sup>211</sup> Annual report for 1929, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03; Annual report for 1946, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>212</sup> Annual report for 1927, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>213</sup> Annual report for 1928, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03; Annual report for 1930, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>214</sup> Annual report for 1932-3, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>215</sup> Attendance figures are drawn from the series of annual reports available at China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03, and in some cases, from the reports reproduced in the Annual reports of the China Association.

volume handbook.<sup>216</sup> This could hardly have been the level of tuition the CA would have expected when creating a substantial endowment fund some years previously.<sup>217</sup>

### *School attendance*

A more detailed analysis of attendance figures emphasises these wider changes. As shown in Figure 4.1, from a starting point of 12 pupils in 1900, attendance numbers had grown to 40 by 1914. As we have seen in the *Reay Report* of 1909, these figures were far higher than any other contemporary language chair in London other than Hebrew.<sup>218</sup> The First World War, however, reduced this figure. Numbers were halved to 20 in 1915, as 14 of the students ‘promptly responded to the call of King and Country, and joined his majesty’s forces.’ 1923 saw a highpoint of 72 students, though numbers decreased slightly in the following years. This decrease was attributed in the annual report of 1926 to ‘reasons which can easily be understood’. Likely this referred to the damage to trade caused by continued warlordism, conflicts in China and by the anti-foreign May Thirtieth Movement of 1925.<sup>219</sup> The 1930’s saw a continued decrease in attendance, with numbers not once exceeding 37, a drop attributed by the CA to trade depression. A small increase is evident in the 1940’s, including a considerable spike during World War two.

However, these figures must be subjected to a more nuanced appraisal to gain a full picture. For the CA, the primary aim of the school was to teach practical, colloquial Chinese to employees of firms and banks involved in the China trade. As shown in Figure.4.2 students attending whilst employed by Far Eastern businesses were indeed the most common at the school for more than half of the years for which records are extant. Whilst this is clearly promising, it does not necessarily mean the school was an unmitigated success. Attendance of business students was particularly susceptible to wider events in Chinese history. Their numbers reduced during the First World War, unrest of the 1920’s, Sino-Japanese war, and the Second World War and

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<sup>216</sup> Bickers, ‘New Light on Lao She’, pp.32-3.

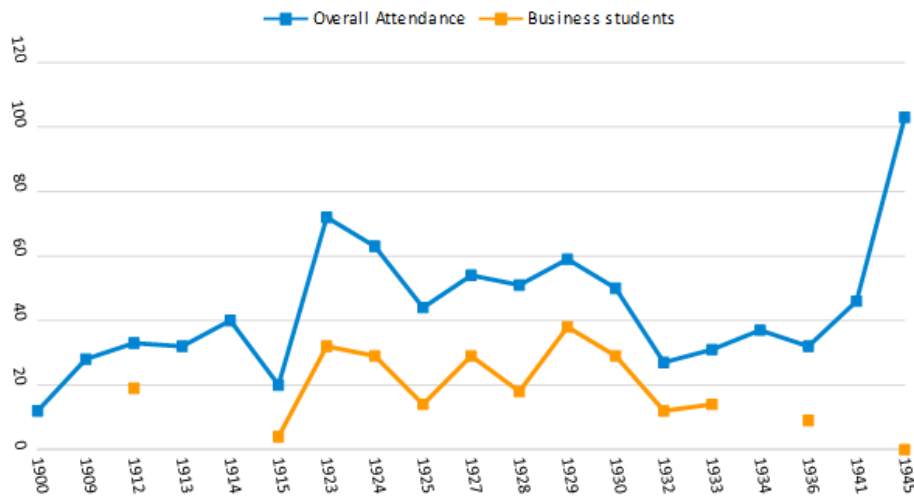
<sup>217</sup> Annual report for 1935, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>218</sup> The Reay Report, pp.65-6.

<sup>219</sup> The size of the armies involved in the struggles between competing Warlords peaked around this time, reaching 2 million men by 1928, and foreign interests were far subject to demands for money to keep their businesses safe, or to avoid warlord organized boycotts of their products. See Sheridan ‘The warlord era’, p.288 and pp.303-7. The impact of May 30<sup>th</sup>, discussed elsewhere in this thesis, was an anti-Foreign backlash which also saw a 16 month strike and boycott which crippled the trade of Hongkong. See Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.3-4.

**Figure 4.1:** School of Chinese, overall student numbers and numbers of students sent by Far Eastern businesses

source: Annual reports, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03

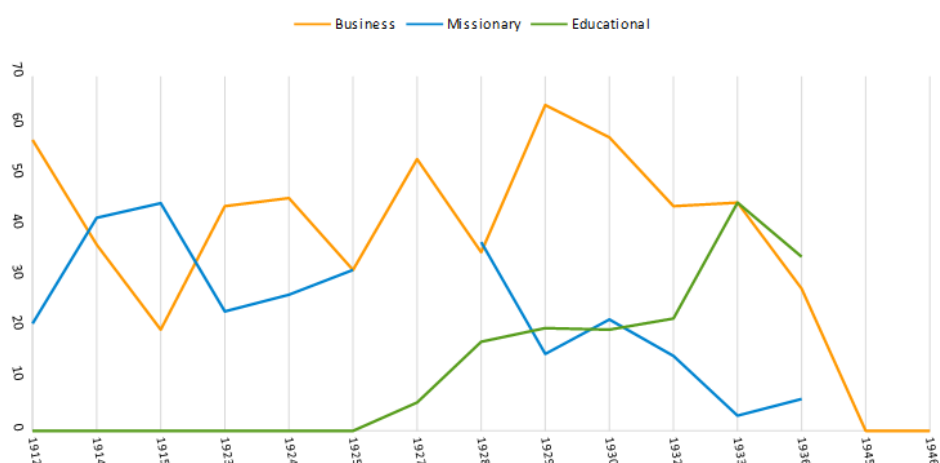


Communist revolution, which saw the complete withdrawal of business students from the school. Indeed, the annual reports note that 1945 and 1946 saw the attendance of no business students at all. A spike of business students after 1925 may well be symptomatic of the aim of China firms to encourage greater personal co-operation with Chinese partners in the wake of the May Thirtieth movement, in contrast to the original fall in student numbers this caused, but this increase in students had faded by 1930.

Overall, this pattern fits well when viewed in concert with the changes evident in the curriculum. As wider events in China made it a less commercially attractive proposition, business interest in the school decreased. No longer able to exert such a high level of influence due to decreased funding, and with fewer business students attending, the curriculum seems to have moved to become more academically focused as evidenced by the rise in students studying purely for educational reasons shown in Figure 4.2. From promising beginnings, the CA gradually lost control of the initiative it had founded, losing influence over the direction of teaching long before this was recognised in the annual report of 1940. Despite these problems, business attendees

**Figure 4.2:** Respective percentages of business, missionary and educational students of the School of Chinese

source: Annual reports, China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment Fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03



were predominant for long periods of the CA's involvement with the scheme. And as we have seen, education in practical Chinese for commercial purposes was provided, if perhaps not to the level the CA wished. Ultimately, this leaves one final question to be asked of the CA School of Practical Chinese—did business students obtain a good knowledge of practical Chinese before their departure to China?

### *Student achievement*

Early results were promising, and as mentioned upon the move to incorporation, great emphasis was placed upon the success of the school. In 1905 the incumbent teacher Walter Hillier praised the achievement and zeal of students, further noting that in his own view several students 'connected with banks and business firms in China' had left for East Asia with 'a knowledge that they have found to stand them in good stead.'<sup>220</sup> By the time of the *Reay Report* of 1909, which ultimately led to the founding of the SOS, Hillier was regarded as the only teacher in the country to have achieved

<sup>220</sup> Annual report for 1905, appendix pp.131-3, available at Annual Reports, 1903-07, CHAS/A/04.



consistent success in teaching the language.<sup>221</sup> Problems, however, were easily visible and a repeated observation following the widening of the school with the foundation of the SOS was that commercial students achieved generally poorer results than their counterparts. Often this was attributed to the timing of classes available to these students. Taking place after the finish of the working day, commercial students were reported to be tired, damaging their ability to learn effectively, displaying a lack of effort that led them to be considered a ‘nuisance’ by staff.<sup>222</sup> Furthermore, these time constraints negatively affected lecturers, who found it difficult to hold enough classes to suit the varied working hours of the employees of all of the major firms involved in the China trade.<sup>223</sup> Others suggested that the ‘haphazard’ nature in which Chinese lecturers were selected led to a poor quality of recruit, often ‘unable to control’ the men from banks and businesses who attended on an evening.<sup>224</sup> Proposed resolutions to standardise the time given to employees between the major China firms came to nothing, however, and nor did a more radical proposal to businesses to allow employees to attend classes during morning working hours.<sup>225</sup> The introduction of a commercial certificate in Chinese proficiency produced increased standards by providing a solid goal for pupils to work towards, and intensive courses showed promise when they were trialled. But largely, commercial students continued to study part time, on an evening, and saw mixed results. Contemporary accounts, too, suggest that the school had made little headway, even amongst the employees of the school’s largest financial backers. Writing in a history of Jardine Matheson, John Keswick noted that upon arrival in Shanghai in 1929 he enquired at the Jardines office about learning the language. He received a response that it was ‘a good idea—none of us do—but a good idea.’<sup>226</sup> His enthusiasm would, perhaps, have pleased his grandfather William who began the scheme and donated £4,000 to endow the school, but the lack

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<sup>221</sup> Barrett, *Singular Listlessness*, p.84.

<sup>222</sup> Bickers, “‘Coolie Work’”, p.387.

<sup>223</sup> Minutes of a meeting of the General Committee, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1932, General Committee Papers, July 1931 – December 1932, CHAS/MCP/37, China Association Collection, SOAS Library, University of London.

<sup>224</sup> Bickers, ‘New Light on Lao She’, p.32.

<sup>225</sup> A further proposal to give students 8 months in China to finish their learning of the language was considered by the HSBC in concert with Walter Hillier, but it is not recorded whether this was actually implemented, see C.S. Addis to Ewen Cameron, 18 November 1904. For the wider proposals see Annual report for 1927, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>226</sup> John Keswick, ‘Two Decades in China’ in Maggie Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books ltd., 1982), p.205.

of effort amongst the other Jardine Matheson employees in Shanghai likely would not have.<sup>227</sup> This disappointment for the CA would no doubt have been exacerbated by the success seen by other students. Missionaries who studied at the school found the level of tuition excellent and comparable to that available in China itself, whilst the success of the academic side of the school is proven by Gilchrist scholarships attained by several graduating students.<sup>228</sup>

The view that the scheme had some potential is compounded by attempting to provide a brief insight into those who passed examinations in 1909. As of this year, British minister John Jordan noted—much as at the start of our study of British efforts to improve the learning of the Chinese language—that ‘Even the Hongkong Bank has still only one man—Hillier—who is competent to transact business with a Chinese official.’<sup>229</sup> With pupils at the school split into five divisions by the examiner the future seemed brighter, as students ranging from those engaged in advanced work to beginners all passed ‘relatively severe’ examinations. By investigating records of foreign residents on the China Coast it can be ascertained that of 14 students, 9 went on to hold positions in China for Far Eastern firms within the next 11 years.<sup>230</sup> Of these, six held positions working for the HSBC, one for the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, and two for the Asiatic Petroleum Company. Certainly, it seems that during the earlier years of the school’s existence, firms which took advantage of the scheme could expect to see some reward. It is important to note that several of these students may also have had departure plans, or even careers in China, altered or cut short due to the First World War.

Yet the school cannot be seen as anything other than a disappointment for the CA. Though tuition for commercial students was made available, it was increasingly marginalised, and seems to have been largely unsuccessful, except for the earliest

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<sup>227</sup> Maggie Keswick ‘The Jardine Family’ in Maggie Keswick (ed.) *The Thistle and the Jade: A Celebration of 150 years of Jardine, Matheson & Co.* (London: Octopus books Ltd., 1982), pp.262-3.

<sup>228</sup> Annual report for 1915, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03; Annual report for 1931, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

<sup>229</sup> Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.124.

<sup>230</sup> In total, 16 students were examined in 1909. The two discounted from this number include one female student who was examined, however female residents of the China Coast are not recorded consistently in the directories utilised. Similarly, a military officer who presented for examination would not appear in the China directories. Of the three students who do not appear in the China directories, one may appear under different initials, though this cannot be proven. For Full details see Appendix C, and the Annual report for 1909, China Association’s School of Practical Chinese Endowment fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

years of the school's existence. One redeeming feature for those who backed the scheme was elucidated by Charles Addis when he noted that even students who failed at the school had benefited in a small way, as had the firms who sent them for tuition. After all, the school at least stopped these students wasting several years in China, and saved their firms the substantial sum it would have cost to do so, by discerning which had little talent for languages and halting what would have been the pointless process of dispatching them to China. Two such students may well have been M.B. Oliver and L.T.R. Rickford, from the examination group of 1909. Although Oliver scored a respectable 68 per cent in his examination, Rickford was comfortably bottom of the class with 29 per cent. Neither, ultimately, had careers in China, and were instead dispatched by the Chartered Bank to Singapore, a British colony where their language shortcomings may not have been so acutely felt.<sup>231</sup>

However, to view the overall outcome of the scheme negatively would be to do a disservice to the wider impact it had. Primarily, this must be seen in the contribution of the school to the establishment of SOAS. Even in the timespan of this study, the wider legacy the CA left through the foundation of a teaching centre for practical Chinese was evident. Although the Second World War coincided with the final decrease in business students, it created renewed demand from military sources. Of the 103 students at the school in 1945, 82 were active service men. With an almost complete dearth of students in 1941, the incumbent professor and his assistant moved temporarily to Birmingham to teach basic Chinese to the 40 men of a volunteer ambulance unit which was preparing to embark for China. By the time the unit departed, several were proficient in basic Chinese characters, and one was able to give a speech in Chinese upon embarkation.<sup>232</sup>

Regardless of the school's final successes or failures, it nonetheless offers us fascinating insight into how a voluntary body such as the CA could act as a focal point through which large competing firms could co-operate to produce a sizeable educational scheme. The use of the CA as an intermediary ensured, while the scheme remained under their control, that all firms were able to benefit and that none would

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<sup>231</sup> See Appendix C. Though few in Singapore spoke English as a first language (1.8% of the population as of 1957) it was, nonetheless, the language used for 'official purposes' and many were able to speak it 'to some extent.' See David Deterding, *Singapore English* (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2007), p.85.

<sup>232</sup> Annual Report for 1941, The China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03; Annual Report for 1945, The China Association's School of Practical Chinese Endowment fund, 1908 – 1955, CHAS/SI/03.

be able to exploit the donations of others. It also offers us the knowledge that, while the Victorian record regarding philanthropy for ‘the advancement of good learning’ has been described as ‘less than dazzling’ that at least in the specific area of Chinese language tuition, serious efforts were made by the CA and its supporters.<sup>233</sup> That many modern foreign language departments of Universities are now offering targeted courses for business and commercial learners to attempt to combat declining student numbers suggest that the CA’s school was based on a sound theory and basis—if not implemented as well as might have been hoped.<sup>234</sup>

## Conclusion

When the CA was founded, it is likely that its leaders and members were unsure what form their charitable and benevolent endeavours would look like. It certainly appears that in their intention to emulate the Straits Association, and from some of their early efforts, that they hoped to become something reminiscent of other bodies, such as ethnic associations, providing charity to individuals linked to China who had fallen on hard times. Because of the relatively elite position of those in the CA’s sphere, however—returnees would, by their very nature, have to have some wealth in order to afford return passage, and those still resident in China also generally fell into the more affluent group—this did not develop beyond a few isolated causes. When conditions altered, and the number of British returnees from China increased as internees returned following World War Two, and more were displaced by the establishment of the PRC, the CA proved successful in supporting these displaced migrants.

Yet, as was made clear by the CA holding a substantial fund of its own for the first time in helping these ex-internees, a lack of resources was evident for much of the period under study. This led the CA explore methods in which this could be circumvented in order for the Association to retain their original commitments to charity. To this end the CA developed to become an organisational nexus through which charity could operate. It proved successful in promoting appeals, and discerning the viability or trustworthiness of appeals, by utilising its position and contacts developed as a transnational network. In this vein it helped both British and Chinese

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<sup>233</sup> Owen, *English Philanthropy*, p.371.

<sup>234</sup> Glenn Fulcher, ‘The Commercialisation of Language Provision at University’ in J. Charles Anderson (ed.), *The politics of Language Education: Individuals and Institutions* (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2009), p.128.

interests, and drew donations most prominently from the firms who operated under the CA's wider banner. It was through these donations that the CA once again made certain that it would act to promote, first and foremost, British trade in China by ensuring that firms gave strategically to attempt to boost not only their own corporate image, but the image of the whole of the British presence in China. With hindsight, we can see that the CA's efforts had little chance of countering the rising tide of Chinese nationalism, but they were nonetheless significant undertakings.

It was this position as an organisational nexus through which competing firms could co-operate that also saw the CA become involved in pursuing philanthropic schemes for education. Understanding these schemes goes some way to expanding on recent work on the foundation of SOAS, which missed the CA's achievement. From an unofficial School of Chinese, the CA's program came to be an endowed chair for teaching modern Chinese, and, by the founding of SOAS, the most prominent example of Asian language teaching in Britain. It is of some disappointment, and it can only have been to the detriment of the British trade in China, that from these promising beginnings Chinese language tuition for commercial ends never fully developed, before being effectively rendered useless by the rise of the PRC and the closure of China to foreign firms.

Once again, we are left with the image of the CA as an association which was wide ranging, and was always aware of the need for compromise. As the most prominent representative of China linked businesses and British return migrants from China in London, they continued to balance the needs of both commerce and individuals in their charitable collections. But as their involvement with education shows, the promotion of commerce and trade always remained their key aim, even if another was more visible, and was directed by the corporate members whose names have surfaced repeatedly throughout this thesis—the HSBC, Chartered Bank, Jardine Matheson and Swires. Once again, too, we are left with the conclusion that the wider CA membership cared little for such schemes, and this finally cements the view that, beside a core group who remained active in business, returned expatriates retained few links to networks which would have allowed them to keep contact with what had been their host society, China.

## CONCLUSION

During the 65 years covered in this study (and more beyond), the CA offered an important organisational anchor for a number of diverse networks that stretched from London to China and in reverse. Concurrently, the Association was a nexus for the discussion of British China policy between the companies and firms located at the heart of the imperial metropole. As a representative of these firms, the CA would then provide a coherent voice for the commercial community, which at times sought to influence policy, and later aimed to align metropole interests with policy, as diplomacy in China became normalised after 1925. Still the Association never lost sight of its wider functions and remained a prominent gathering point for returnees, continuing to provide a social space for these men for the whole of the period under consideration, with the exception of the period during the two world wars. Alongside this charity and philanthropy were pursued for most of the period, effectively anchoring the CA in London's associational world—one in which philanthropic endeavours were an important element. Ultimately, then, at the most basic level the CA was successful in putting in place the right associational structures that enabled it to pursue these activities over an extended period of time. But our conclusions must go further than simply assessing whether the CA was a success in terms of its own goals. In particular, the CA offers us much greater insight into the development of return migrant voluntary associations and how their activities extend beyond their immediate community and civil society operations into the political sphere.

The first major conclusion of this work is one which does not conflict with current historiography, but certainly adds nuance and depth. British government policy, was, as is largely the current consensus, directed to fit metropole needs and ignored the presence of settlers based at the periphery. This study, however, shows that even a network such as the CA, which set up to give a voice to the whole British commercial community—and maintained the pretence of doing so throughout its lifetime—gave scant consideration to the needs and requests of periphery interests. Despite this, the CA considered its periphery branches, most notably Shanghai, to be of great importance—size, for any political pressure group, does bring influence—and a branch structure brought further benefits, including a valuable information source. Transnational communication networks have long since been viewed as important in

shaping networks and maintaining Empire more broadly—from imperial press systems to personal correspondence that crossed vast distances—but the communication between metropole and periphery enabled by associational structures adds another valuable layer and the CA facilitated its provision. Important though that layer was in establishing direct information-sharing routes, the CA did not always consider what it received from China important enough to act upon. Often, as we have seen, Shanghai was given superficial concessions to maintain and sustain the direct link to the CA in London, but was rarely able to exert any real power. The oligarchy that became prevalent in the CA was, therefore, in essence the mechanism by which periphery interests were denied a voice in London.

It was in denying periphery interests a voice after 1925 that the CA came to find a valuable new role with their co-option by the British government into the new process of normalisation of relations with China. The Association were given the chance to offer input on the proposed surrender of extraterritoriality, for example, and in return for the privilege began to espouse the idea in a positive light to their corporate membership which extended by the time to 56 china linked firms.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, key members of the CA contemporary to this period, including for instance G.W. Swire, found the CA a useful vehicle to drive the implementation of other key aspects of British policy, particularly the founding of new social relations with prominent Chinese. Providing the largest consistent China-oriented social gatherings in the capital, the CA was a natural location for the establishment—and public display—of these links by metropole interests, and was successful in doing both.

In light of these activities this thesis has highlighted too, however, what is a central problem in associational history: the fact that the full reach of activities and networks that associations like the CA facilitated often remains hidden. While annual dinners in themselves were recorded, for example, conversations held and the scope of connections they enabled were not. Although this thesis utilised a range of approaches and sources to offset this concern they can only go so far for it was, of course, in the very interest of the CA that dinners provided informal networking opportunities away from the public eye, particularly with respect to connections facilitated with politicians. Still it is through the examination of the series of dinners this thesis has shown how the semi-private sphere of CA dinners enabled issues to be

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<sup>1</sup> See the annual report for 1929-30, p.xxxi, available at Annual Reports, 1928-34, CHAS/A/09.

presented to diplomats and civil servants who managed the British presence in China. But as we have seen through the Shanghai branch complaints of 1905 which sought to alter the Association's methods for attaining influence, and by speakers at dinners often reminding members of the CA's close relationship with the Foreign Office and other government departments, it seems these links were not even readily visible to those outside of the Association's inner workings. Despite such occasional tensions, this thesis has shown that resultant calls for extension in its political methods were prominently rejected throughout. The CA sought, from its inception, to be an insider interest group, which used the influence and status of some of its individual members and member firms to create connections with departments of the British government.

Though the CA forged such links, it remained, as this thesis must too, tempered by realism. The CA was aware that it could, at best, win small concessions and occasionally gain the ability to suggest policy to the British government. The trade with China in the period under consideration held nowhere near the importance it had in previous decades, and the government were not prepared to undertake any radical manoeuvres as a result. It must be noted, of course, that this was not without its worth. Although it has been impossible to note every occasion upon which the CA conversed with government, keeping the British government informed of the minutiae of the commercial environment in China was something the CA undertook with a ready appetite—only a partial copy, for example, of the most important correspondence between the CA and the British government ran to 54 pages in 1912.<sup>2</sup> Whether the methods of other return migrant associations differed would be an important further investigation to provide comparative context, as would investigating whether this altered depending on patterns of settlement in the 'origin' destination of these returnees. Would a return migrant association comprised of displaced settlers, for example, create a pressure group which was ultimately lower status, denied connections with the government, and become an outsider interest group? The failure of returned settlers from China following the rise of the PRC to have their pension needs met by the British government and their resultant dependency on the CA certainly hints that this may be so.

But as this thesis has demonstrated, the CA was never solely a political pressure group that the earlier study by Pelcovits made it out to be. Indeed, it expanded

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<sup>2</sup> Annual report for 1911-12, appendix, available at Annual Reports, 1910-15, CHAS/A/06.



greatly beyond that narrow frame, and was never intended to be confined to political lobbying in the first place. Outside of the specific experience of Sino-British politics, the CA, therefore, offers a much broader range of insights into the structure, aims, objects and operations of a return migrant voluntary association. The first key conclusion specific to this is that it was the nature of the CA—due to expatriate economic dominance in China and the simple fact that expatriates are sojourners—that it was essentially a returned expatriate association as opposed to a return migrant association. Added to this, the Association retained the membership patterns common to other voluntary associations of the period, excluding women and other outsiders, in the case of the CA due to its geographical links Eurasians, Asians, and other nationalities at varying times. With this individual, and British, expatriate presence, too, came the presence of the firms these men held links to, multinationals drawn from the backgrounds of trade, shipping and finance, even if not all members retained such active business links.

For the individual members the CA provided a number of benefits. It offered an invaluable social sphere, where they could renew acquaintances from East Asia, and even create new contacts, networks, and social capital amongst themselves. One of the perhaps more surprising conclusions from this investigation is quite how important these members felt these occasions to be—and that the idea of a difficult return even extended to these supposedly elite members of the British migrant presence. As the thesis has noted, they socialised sporadically otherwise, and enjoyed the CA dinners and later receptions which were, for many, the main social event of the calendar year. Even those resident in London developed a particular attachment to the Thatched House Club which became an early meeting point for Association members—the club would even send a wreath to the funeral of first association chairman William Keswick.<sup>3</sup> Investigations of the CA's social functions have also helped to enlighten some of the specifics of this difficult return for China returnees, and suggest it may well have been, if not a global phenomenon, one that was certainly shaped by an individual's experience of a specific location. Alongside this, although less prominent as many members were relatively well off, was the safety net that the CA provided, through the utilisation of networks to direct support, be this through collections, seeking employment for returnees, or directing larger charitable funds. In

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<sup>3</sup> "Obituary." *Times* (London, England), 11 March 1912, p.11.

this combination of activities, we might view the CA as, although a return migrant association at its heart, something akin to an ethnic association—though with the shared experience at its heart not ethnicity, but the adopted identity of the China British expatriate. Like ethnic associations, providing sociability and a support network was key for the CA, offering a chance to retain their common identity, shaped by their experience of East Asia.

What makes the CA distinct in the matrix of associational life, however, is not so much its individual membership, but rather how it enabled corporate interests to shape its operations and activities. For corporate members, the CA offered ways to circumvent the lack of British government will to undertake a more radical policy in China. One way the CA saw to counter these increasing difficulties was through the dissemination of charity. While charity given to individuals was often purely driven by benevolent consideration, and while this was also true of some of the CA's larger-scale collections, many of its most prominent efforts were clear strategic undertakings. From reactionary efforts to avoid boycotts, to proactive efforts to improve the corporate image of companies and the whole British trade, they gave often, and in many cases on a large scale to charitable schemes. The CA became a valuable entity in the process for such collections. It provided a body through which the British trade community could donate under a single banner for the general good of what we might describe as British prestige, while also ensuring that all firms gave fairly in relation to their own stature, and by removing the free rider problem. In combination, this sought to improve the image of the British in China. The CA's responses to charitable appeals also highlight the difficulties of ensuring the reliability of appeals over large distances, even with the wealth of connections they possessed. They further suggest that without direct control—or the involvement of a trusted third party in East Asia—such appeals were much less likely to succeed. Later collections also suggest that the best response was to be found when British, as well as Chinese, subjects were the aim of the collections.

But it was through philanthropic enterprises that the CA established what is perhaps its most enduring legacy. While other sources readily identified that the British presence in China was suffering due to a lack of language skills, the CA proved itself to be the only body who could boast a significant enough network of contacts to gather the funding necessary to establish a practical solution to this problem. Bringing together the most prominent British firms involved in the China trade they provided a

consistent, solid financial backing to establish the first practical source of Chinese language tuition in Britain. Although the CA did not retain control of the scheme, and did not see the benefit they had hoped from it, it nonetheless evolved to become a key foundational part of SOAS. In the end both such philanthropic endeavours and charity provisions were not just a result of immediate practical needs, however, but rather also of a wider sense of patrician benevolence—a duty to give back—that many CA members shared and this was certainly encapsulated with the SOAS scheme, as it provided tuition to British troops in times of war, and continues to this day, housing within it the archives of the CA itself.

Ultimately, when we view the CA we must consider all of these undertakings holistically. That the CA could pursue all the activities it pursued, was, of course, made possible by its fundamental organisation and structure; highlighting the importance of overlapping networks—business, political, charitable, sociable and transnational—as mechanisms underpinning voluntary associations. None would have operated as effectively in isolation of the others, and the CA proved a valuable nexus in connecting them. Whether other return migrant associations utilised this position to such a full extent provides further scope for research, and a comparative study of other associations would allow the position of the CA to be located with more accuracy, and to assess its uniqueness or otherwise.

This array of networks and the extent to which the disparate sections of the CA membership utilized them also allows us some broader insight into returned expatriates, specifically assessing the links they retained to their host society, China, following their return. For much of the wider membership, it is clear they had allowed almost all links to China to lapse. They did not contribute to charitable or educational schemes, and cared little for politics. They only remained linked to the country superficially, through the social network of the CA—itself one step removed from China. Yet for those who still had business and economic links to China, the CA offered a valuable array of networks—political, charitable and sociable, as well as the transnational network of the branch structure—to ensure they could pursue their business aims in China through a diverse array of actions. In a broader sense, too, this reminds us that for returnees, the process of returning varied greatly. For the elite, it could in fact mark the start of the highest point of their careers, managing a transnational or multinational business from London. For those lower down the ladder it was an end, be it of their career as a whole, or of their continuing links to China. It

is a testament to the CA that it managed to provide, with at least some success, for such a wide array of needs and roles, being, as it remained throughout the period of this study, the premier China linked return migrant association extant in Britain.

## **Appendix A: The China Association's founding members**

Listed below are the original members of the CA. As complete main employment history as possible is given, alongside a short biography outlining any further information, including roles they held as directors of other Far Eastern linked companies. Due to incomplete records date ranges for particular employment roles are on occasion fragmentary, and are only to be taken as snapshots, rather than complete histories.

Any other active links to China these men held (primarily business based) at the time of the foundation of the CA are also noted.

Data is taken, unless noted, from a series of China Directories, Hong lists and Lists of Land renters in Shanghai, available online at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/history/customs/ancestors/directories.html> (last accessed 29 October 2018) and the national library of Singapore, available online at <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/printheritage> (last accessed 29 October 2018).

### **Adams, F.C.**

1865 - Tea Inspector, Reiss and Co., Foochow

1867 - Manager, Reiss and Co., Hongkong (Praya)

### **Adamson, William R.**

1854 - Clerk, McEwan & Co., Singapore<sup>1</sup>

1856—59 - Merchant, self-employed, Shanghai (Absent 1859)

1859—60 - Assistant, Borneo Co., Singapore

1861—62 - Merchant, A&Co. Shanghai

1863—65 - Manager, Borneo Co., Ltd, Hongkong<sup>2</sup>

1867 - Merchant, Adamson & Co., Foochow

1869—71 - Partner, Gilfillan Wood & Co., Singapore<sup>3</sup>

1876—92 - Merchant, Gilfillan Wood & Co., Singapore (Absent 1879-92)

1908 - Managing Director, Gilfillan Wood & Co. London<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wright (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya*, pp.674-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ding 'Sino-British Mercantile Relations in Singapore's Entrepot Trade 1870-1915', pp.252-3.

<sup>4</sup> Wright, (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya*, pp.674-5.

William R. Adamson began his career in East Asia in Singapore, as a clerk for McEwan and co. in 1854.<sup>5</sup> This was followed with a period as a self-employed merchant, with a short interregnum as a manager for the Borneo Co. in Hongkong.<sup>6</sup> He became a partner in the firm Gilfillan Wood & Co. from 1870, and the firm would later be styled Adamson, Gilfillan & Co.<sup>7</sup> He was active as late as 1908 as managing director. Alongside these roles he served as a director for the P&O, and served as chairman of the Straits Settlements Association. He was a member of the Singapore Municipal Council, served on a Colonial Office commission into the currency of the Straits Settlements, and held a reputation as a light comedian of some note.<sup>8</sup>

### **Anderson, Robert**

- 1867—68 - Clerk, Jardine Matheson & Co., Kiukang
- 1872 - Agent, Jardine Matheson & Co., Kiukang
- 1874 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong
- 1876—67 - Merchant, R. Anderson & Co., Kiukang (absent)
- 1879 - Merchant, R. Anderson & Co., Kiukang and Hankow
- 1882 - Merchant, R. Anderson & Co., Kiukang and Shanghai
- 1884 - Merchant, R. Anderson & Co., Shanghai (absent)

As of 1902, Robert Anderson & Co., continued in Shanghai. However, Robert Anderson is not listed as actively involved in the business. Whether Anderson had removed his capital is, unfortunately, impossible to ascertain.

### **Barnes, Frederick Dallas**

- 1861—62 - Assistant, P&O, Hongkong / Singapore<sup>9</sup>
- 1864 - Assistant, P&O, Singapore
- 1872—74 - Agent, P&O, Shanghai
- 1895 - Managing Directory, P&O, London<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> "Obituary." *Times* (London, England), 1 December 1899, p.9.

<sup>10</sup> "Banks." *Times* (London, England), 6 April 1895, p.4.

Barnes is last recorded in China in 1874, after which he retired in Britain for several years. He returned, however, to the P&O shortly after.<sup>11</sup> By 1895 he had risen to the rank of senior managing director in London and sat, in this capacity, on the London committee of the HSBC, the role he held at the inception of the CA.<sup>12</sup> He was praised for helping Thomas Sutherland implement the changes that made the P&O preeminent in East Asian shipping, and he also held a directorship of the BCC.<sup>13</sup>

**Batt, E.W.**

1862—68 - Clerk, Jardine Matheson & Co., Shanghai

1872—77 Merchant, Geo. Barnet & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1877)

Batt seems to have retained a personal interest in the trade between Britain and China, evidenced through his membership of the CA and his attendance, as late as 1897, to a lecture on the matter given by George Jamieson.<sup>14</sup> However, there is no evidence he continued to hold business interests in China by the inception of the CA.

**Beazley, Henry.**

1865—67 - Clerk, Birley, Worthington & Co., Shanghai

1868 - Clerk, Birley, Worthington & Co, Hankow

1872—79 - Merchant, Beazley, Paget & Co., Hankow

By 1882 the business had ceased to be listed in directories, indicating the withdrawal of Beazley's capital. He was, alongside this role, chairman of the chamber of commerce for Hankow in 1873.

**Blackwell, R.**

1872—73 - Clerk, Russell & Co., Praya Central, Hongkong

1874 - Clerk, Russell & Co., Hermitage, Caine Road, Hongkong

1876—79 - Clerk, Russell & Co., Praya, Hongkong

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<sup>11</sup> "Obituary." *Times* (London, England), 1 December 1899, p.9.

<sup>12</sup> "Insurance Companies." *Times* (London, England), 24 September 1898, p.13. Harcourt, 'Black Gold: P&O and the Opium Trade, 1847-1914', p.66.

<sup>13</sup> "Obituary." *Times* (London, England), 1 December 1899, p.9.

<sup>14</sup> "China and British Trade." *Times* (London, England), 11 November 1897, p.8.

**Bottomley, C.D.**

- 1865 - Clerk, A. Scott & Co., Hongkong
- 1867 - Broker, Hongkong
- 1868—72 - Broker & Auctioneer, Hongkong
- 1873 - Broker, Gough Street, Hongkong
- 1874 - Broker, Shanghai
- 1876—77 - Clerk, Douglas Lapraik & Co., Hongkong
- 1879—89 - Merchant, Douglas Lapraik & Co., Hongkong

Bottomley also served for at least five years a HSBC director in Hongkong.<sup>15</sup>

**Bowen, Rt. Hon. Sir George F. (GCMG)**

- 1882—85 - Governor of Hongkong

Bowen had a long career in the colonial service, his earliest post of Governor being that of Queensland in 1859. He also served roles in New Zealand and Mauritius, before arriving in 1882 to take up the post of Governor of Hongkong. He retired from the post in 1885, and colonial service in 1887, on account of his health.<sup>16</sup> He served as the first chairman of the CA—although at that time, the role was akin to what would later be the CA presidency, providing a figurehead rather than actively participating at committee meetings.

**Brand, John**

- 1872—76 - Clerk, Brand Bros. & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1874)
- 1877 - Merchant, Brand Bros. & Co., Shanghai

On leaving Brand Bros., & Co. in Shanghai, Brand was admitted in 1878 as a partner of Messrs. Robert Brand & Co. of Union Court, Old Broad Street, London.<sup>17</sup> Whether he was active in this role by the time of the CA's foundation cannot, unfortunately, be ascertained.

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<sup>15</sup> Date range established using the *North China Herald* (Shanghai, China), issues bookending his time on the court of directors are dated 12 September 1884, p.24 and 05 March 1889, p.1.

<sup>16</sup> Joyce, R.B., 'Bowen, Sir George Ferguson (1821-1899)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 3.

<sup>17</sup> "Money Market and City Intelligence." *Times* (London, England), 3 June 1878, p.9.



**Buxton, Alfred (M.D.)**

No information available

**Caffin, Edward**

No information available

**Cameron, Ewen**

1867 - Accountant, Bank of Hindustan, China & Japan, Hongkong

1868 - Clerk, HSBC, Hongkong

1874—90 - Manager, HSBC, Shanghai<sup>18</sup>

At the date of Cameron joining the CA, it is unclear whether he was still resident in China, or had returned to Britain. Regardless, he was still active for the HSBC at this point, as a manager of the London Office.<sup>19</sup>

**Carter, J.F.**

1859—68 - Silk Broker, Shanghai

Carter was also recorded as a partner in firm Carter & Co. for a single year, 1865, and was recorded on a list of Shanghai land renters in 1864.

**Cheyne, A.**

1873—79 - Clerk, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong

**Coghill, J.S.G.**

1862—68 - M.D., Surgeon, Shanghai

Coghill also served as the Shanghai Municipal medical officer in 1868. He was part of an investigation into the workings of a Shanghai hospital in the same year, and was apparently a ‘well-known local doctor’<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> “Sir Ewen Cameron.” *Times* (London, England), 11 December 1908, p.13.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Kerrie L. Macpherson, *A Wilderness of Marshes: The Origins of Public Health in Shanghai, 1843-1893* (Hongkong, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.175, p.187 and p.224.

**Coxon, Atwell**

1865—82 - Bill and Bullion Broker, Hongkong

1882 - Consul for Belgium, Hongkong

Coxon was appointed captain of the Hongkong Volunteer regiment in 1864.<sup>21</sup> Coxon also received the medal of the order of St. Gregory for his services to the Church in Hongkong.<sup>22</sup>

**Cull, James**

1864 - renting land, Shanghai

1865—67 - partner - Shaw Bros. & Co., Shanghai

**Darling, D.A.**

1872 - Agent, Brown & Co., Formosa

1873—74 - Tea inspector and Agent, Brown & Co., Tamsui

1876—79 - Merchant, Brown & Co., Amoy

1882 - resident in Shanghai

1884 - Barlow & Co., Shanghai

1888 - Merchant, Barlow & Co., Shanghai

**Deacon, Albert**

1859 - Merchant, Canton

1861 - Merchant, D& Co., Macao

1862 - Acting British Consular Agent, Macao

Deacon was, as of 1875, running the British based business E&A Deacons. In 1875 he also became a director on the London Committee of the HSBC, a post he held as of the founding of the CA.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Dennys, *The Treaty Ports of China and Japan*, p.101.

<sup>22</sup> See catalogue of the Norfolk Record Office, NEV 8/5, 590 x 1, Copy of a petition to the pope for Atwell Coxon to be honoured, 1875, (available online at <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/cc692bc2-c80c-4722-aaad-fea7bd61deb1>, last accessed 27 October 2017).

<sup>23</sup> "Money Market and City Intelligence." *Times* (London, England), 11 November 1875, p.6. "Public Appointments" *Times* (London, England), 6 Jul 1889, p.15.

**Dent, Sir Alfred (K.C.M.G)**

1864 - arrival in China<sup>24</sup>

1867 - clerk, Shanghai

1872 - Merchant, A.Dent & Co., Shanghai

Somewhat of a short career for the founder and long running vice—chairman of the CA, it is perhaps not representative of his wider impact on East Asia. He restored the Dent firm following its failure in the 1860's, before moving on to play a large role in the founding of the British North Borneo Company.<sup>25</sup> He returned to London, and ran a city based mercantile firm and was, alongside this, a director for the Chartered Bank.<sup>26</sup>

**Dent, Herbert F.**

1873—79 - Silk Inspector, Birley & Co., Canton

1882 - Merchant, Canton

1888—89 - Commission Agent, Herbert Dent & Co., Canton

Dent was still recorded as resident in China as of the foundation of the CA, and potentially represents a corresponding member of the Association.

**Dewhurst, G.B.**

No information available

**Dickinson, Chas**

1861 - Merchant, Wilkinson & Co., Hongkong

**Duncanson, E.F.**

1859 - Merchant, Shanghai

1861—68 - Merchant, Gibb, Livingstone & Co., Shanghai

1864 - Renting land in Shanghai

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<sup>24</sup> Law, 'Dent family (per. c.1820–1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>25</sup> Law, 'Dent family (per. c.1820–1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.; Owen Rutter, *British North Borneo: an account of its history, resources, and native tribes* (London: Constable & Co. Ltd, 1922), pp.169-78.

<sup>26</sup> Law, 'Dent family (per. c.1820–1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Duncanson spent a relatively short period in China. However, he remained linked to the trade long after his return. As of 1894 he was still an active member of London firm T.A. Gibb & Co (likely the London end of Gibb, Livingstone and Co.) and sat on the London committee of the HSBC.<sup>27</sup> Alongside this, Duncanson was also a board member of the P&O.<sup>28</sup>

### **Ede, N.J.**

1865—67 - Clerk, Dent & Co., Hongkong

1871—97 - Secretary, Union Insurance Society of Canton, Hongkong

Ede was still resident in China at the formation of the CA, either joining as a corresponding member, or whilst on home leave. Leading the Union Insurance Society of Canton for 26 years, he ‘transformed’ the Union’s business model and instituted considerable reforms to management and improvements in accounting.<sup>29</sup>

### **Elias, Ellis**

1861 - Clerk, Barnet & Co., Shanghai

1862 - Clerk, Barnet & Co., Yokohama

1867 - Clerk, Barnet & Co., Kagawa

1872—77 - Merchant, G. Barnet & Co., Shanghai (Absent)

Ellis’ return to London by 1873 is substantiated by a Police report in *The Times*, where he was involved in a minor claim in court regarding a dispute with a taxi driver.<sup>30</sup> By 1881 he was employed by the Lion Insurance Co. in London.<sup>31</sup> By 1905 he was still employed by the company, now the Yorkshire Insurance, as part of the London board.<sup>32</sup> Whether the company had operations in China at the founding of the CA is unclear, however they operated a Hongkong agency by 1902.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> “Banks” *Times* (London, England), 26 Sep 1894, p.11.

<sup>28</sup> Harcourt, ‘Black Gold: P&O and the Opium Trade, 1847-1914’, p.27.

<sup>29</sup> Fen and Rao, *Enriching Lives: a history of insurance in Hongkong, 1841-2010*, pp.22-3; Union Insurance Society of Canton, *A Brief Historical Record of the Union Insurance Society of Canton, Ltd.*

<sup>30</sup> “Police.” *Times* (London, England), 11 February 1873, p.11.

<sup>31</sup> “Railway and Other Companies.” *Times* (London, England), 5 May 1881, p.7

<sup>32</sup> “The Money Market.” *Times* (London, England), 15 April 1904, p.11.

<sup>33</sup> Aviva, *Our History: Lion Insurance Company* (available online at <https://heritage.aviva.com/our-history/companies/lion-insurance-company/>, last accessed 26 October 2017).

### **Endicott, William**

1859—67 - Commander, Receiving Ship Ann Welsh, Woosung Bar, Shanghai

1864 - renting land in Shanghai

Somewhat of a divergence from the average CA member, Endicott was listed as Commander of the Receiving Ship Ann Welsh. In practical terms this meant he was in charge of a floating hulk 'receiving ship' housing opium stocks offshore prior to their distribution, predominantly for the firm Augustine Heard & Co.<sup>34</sup> He retired to London, and joined the CA despite his American nationality prohibiting this.<sup>35</sup>

### **Ezekiel, Solomon**

1865 - Partner, D. Sassoon & Co., Shanghai

1867 - Clerk, D. Sassoon & Co., Hongkong

1872—73 - Merchant, E.D. Sassoon & Co., Hongkong

Solomon remained linked to the Sassoon family firms following his return to Britain, and was a signatory for D. Sassoons in London as of 1892.<sup>36</sup>

### **Ford, Colin MacKenzie**

1872 - Assistant, British Consulate, Canton

1873—74 - Assistant, British Consulate, and post office agent, Swatow

1876 - Assistant, British Consulate, Canton

1877 - Inspector, British Consulate, Hankow

1879 - Acting accountant, British legation, Peking

1882 - Acting consul, British Consulate, Pakhoi

1884 - 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant, HBM's Consul, Shanghai

1888 - British vice Consul, Foochow

1889 - Acting British consul general, Seoul

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<sup>34</sup> Lockwood, *Augustine Heard and Company*, pp.28-30 ;John Heard, *an account of his life and the history of Augustine Heard and Co*, p.64 and p.182.

<sup>35</sup> *Entry for J.B. Endicott at Old Hong Kong*, available online at <https://gwulo.com/node/32346> (last accessed 6 November 2018).

<sup>36</sup> "The Money Market." *Times* (London, England), 01 January 1892, p.9.

**Gamman, Edwin**

1874 - Clerk, Aug. Heard & Co., Foochow

1884—89 - Merchant, Edwin Gamman and Co., Shanghai and Hankow

**Gamwell, Frederick R.**

1859 - Clerk, Shanghai

1861—74 - Silk Broker, Shanghai

1864 - Renting land, Shanghai

Gamwell would later become a partner in John Swire and Sons, London, a role he likely held at the formation of the CA.<sup>37</sup> Certainly, he was one of five London partners in the business by 1893 and has been described a John Swires' 'right-hand man in London'.<sup>38</sup>

**Gearing, J.G.W.**

1868—72 - Clerk, A.E. Salter, Chinkiang

1873—77 - Merchant / Commission agent, A.E. Salter, Chinkiang

1879—82 - Merchant, Gearing & Co., Chinkiang

1882 - Vice Consul for the Netherlands, Chinkiang

**Gibb, George**

1845—47 - Canton

**Gilfillan, S.**

1855 - Assistant, McEwen & Co., Singapore

1859—65 - Manager, Borneo Co., Singapore

1866—67 - Manager, Borneo Co., Singapore (absent)

1868—71 - Partner, Gilfillan Wood & Co., Europe, London

1879 - Merchant, Gilfillan Wood & Co., Singapore

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<sup>37</sup> Hook, *A Guide to the Papers of John Swire and Sons Limited*, introduction.

<sup>38</sup> Hugh Cortazzi, *Britain and Japan: Biographical Portraits, volume 4* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p.427 note 17.

1882—89 - Merchant, Gilfillan Wood & Co., Singapore (absent)

Gilfillan began as an assistant in McEwen & Co., Singapore, before taking on a role as manager in Singapore for the Borneo Co. He returned to London which in the employ of the Borneo Co., when he seems to have launched the European end of the business which carried his name. He remained an active partner in the firm until at least 1904.<sup>39</sup>

### **Gilman, Ellis**

1865 - Clerk, Gilman & Co., Shanghai

### **Grant, Cardross**

1872—73, Clerk, Bradley & Co., Swatow

1874—76, Merchant, Bradley & Co., Swatow

1882 - Clerk, Hudson & Co., Yokohama

Grant retained an interest in China, as evidenced by his helping to preside over a speech giving in 1905 in England by Sun Yat Sen.<sup>40</sup> He does not seem, however, to have retained any active commercial links.

### **Grant, Chas. Lyall**

1862 - Merchant, Grant & Co., Tientsin

1865—68 - Tea inspector, W.R. Adamson & Co., Foochow

1872 - Merchant, Adamson, Bell & Co., Foochow

1873—74 - Merchant, Adamson, Bell & Co., Shanghai

1876—88 - Merchant, Adamson, Bell & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1879—88)

Grant remained active in the firm of Adamson, Bell & Co. for some time despite his residence in Britain. He was still active following the foundation of the CA, when in 1892 he was summoned to court in relation to a case regarding the debts of the firm.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> "The Money Market." *Times* (London, England), 01 November 1904, p.13.

<sup>40</sup> Patrick Anderson, *The Lost Book of Sun Yatsen and Edwin Collins* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p.247.

<sup>41</sup> "Queens Bench Division." *Times* (London, England), 04 February 1892, p.13.

### **Gundry, R.S.**

1865—77 - Editor, *North China Daily News*, Shanghai

Gundry, the first secretary of the CA, was a journalist during his career in China. He was later an author, penning a number of works on the country.

### **Gwyther, John Howard**

1859 - Chartered Mercantile Bank, Singapore<sup>42</sup>

1860 - Sub-agent, Chartered Bank of India and China, Singapore

1862 - Manager, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Shanghai

1864 - Renting land, Shanghai

1867 - Bill and Bullion Broker, Shanghai

1868 - Chartered Mercantile Bank, Shanghai<sup>43</sup>

Gwyther returned from East Asia in 1869, and rose through the ranks of the Chartered Mercantile Bank in London to be manager (1871—92), director (1887—1904) and chairman (1896—1904).<sup>44</sup> For further information, see the brief biography in *Realms of Silver: One Hundred Years of Banking in the East* by Compton Mackenzie.<sup>45</sup>

### **Hanbury, Thomas**

1853 - Shanghai<sup>46</sup>

1856 - Merchant, Hanbury & Co., Shanghai

1861—1873 - Merchant, Bower, Hanbury & Co., Shanghai (absent 1868)

1864 - Renting land in Shanghai

Hanbury arrived in Shanghai in 1853, and had sold off his business interests by 1871.<sup>47</sup> He was, alongside his mercantile activities, the largest owner of land in Shanghai.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Bostock 'Gwyther, John Howard (1835–1921)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> MacKenzie, *Realms of Silver: One Hundred Years of Banking in the East*, p.155.

<sup>46</sup> McConnell, Anita, 'Hanbury, Sir Thomas (1832–1907)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, May 2009 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/54055>, last accessed 26 October 2017).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.



As of 1890, his investments totalled some 1,462 properties in the city.<sup>49</sup> A keen botanist, he later moved to Italy and invested internationally.<sup>50</sup> He retained a wider interest in China as a member of the bi-metallic league as of 1894, also penning letters to *The Times* on China in 1898 and 1902.<sup>51</sup>

### **Hannen, Nicholas John**

- 1872—74 - Acting Assistant Judge, Yokohama
- 1876—77 - Barrister at Law, Shanghai
- 1879 - Barrister at Law and British Crown Advocate, Shanghai
- 1882 - Acting Chief Judge, HBM's Supreme Court, Shanghai
- 1888 - Judge, HBM's Court, Yokohama
- 1889 - Judge, HBM's Court, Yokohama (Absent)

Hannen joined the CA whilst home on leave in 1889. He would later hold the combined post of HBM's chief judge and consul general in Shanghai, a combination of posts the CA would argue against.

### **Harrison, George**

- 1862 - Assistant accountant, Oriental Bank, Hongkong
- 1865 - Assistant accountant, Oriental Bank, Shanghai
- 1865—76 - Absent from directories
- 1876—77 - Manager, Oriental Bank, Hongkong

### **Hart, John William**

- 1865—67 - Clerk, D. Muirhead, Shanghai
- 1868 - Engineer, D. Muirhead, Shanghai
- 1873 - Architect and Civil Engineer, Hiogo
- 1873—82 - Absent from directories

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<sup>49</sup> Alasdair Moore, *La Mortola: in the footsteps of Thomas Hanbury*, chapter seven.

<sup>50</sup> Further detail likely lies in the Thomas Hanbury Papers, held privately. Enquires should be made to the national archives, see *Catalogue: Thomas Hanbury Papers* (available online at <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/N13668778>, last accessed 6 June 2018).

<sup>51</sup> "The Money Market." *Times* (London, England), 14 April 1894, p.13 "The Riots at Shanghai." *Times* (London, England), 26 August 1898, p.10. "The China War Indemnity." *Times* (London, England), 21 May 1902, p.7.

1882—84 - Engineer in Chief, Waterworks Co., Shanghai

Hart was a noted architect in China, erecting some of the first concrete structures in the country as part of the Shanghai Waterworks.<sup>52</sup> He had returned to Britain by the foundation of the CA, and gave a paper on the waterworks to the institute of civil engineers.<sup>53</sup> His later investments in engineering were in North America, as part of the Elkhorn Mining Company, Ltd., rather than China.<sup>54</sup>

**Harvey, Alex, S**

1867 - Student Interpreter, Peking

1872 - Assistant, British consulate, Newchang

1873 - Acting Consul, British consulate, Newchang

1874 - Vice Consul for Britain and Denmark, Newchang

1876 - British Assistant Vice Consul and Post office agent, Hoihow

**Harwood, H.G.**

1884—88, Solicitor, R.E. Wainewright, Shanghai

Harwood was returned to London and still active as a solicitor by 1888.<sup>55</sup> His London business was dissolved in 1901.<sup>56</sup>

**Harwood, W.R.**

1873 - Solicitor, Harwood and Wainewright, Shanghai

1874 - Solicitor, Harwood and Wainewright, Shanghai (Absent)

**Haslam, Robert H.**

1872—73 - Tea Inspector, J. Silverlock & Co., Foochow

1874—79 - Merchant, J. Silverlock & Co., Foochow

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<sup>52</sup> Jeffery W. Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870-2000* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p.40.

<sup>53</sup> John William Hart 'Shanghai Water-Works' *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers*, 100 (1890), pp.217-245.

<sup>54</sup> "Banks." *Times* (London, England), 4 December 1894, p.15. Clark C. Spence, *British Investments and the American Mining Frontier, 1860-1901* (1958, London and New York: Routledge, reprinted, 2000), p.48.

<sup>55</sup> "In Re Arthur Bird." *Times* (London, England), 26 Sep 1888, p.3.

<sup>56</sup> "Partnerships Dissolved." *Times* (London, England), 5 January 1901, p.10.

**Hatton, Eldred**

1882 - Clerk, Gibb, Livingstone & Co., Shanghai

**Hayter, Owen Edward**

1862 - Dept. Assistant Com. General, Commissariat Dept., Hongkong

1865 - Dept. Assistant Com. General, Commissariat Dept., Shanghai

Hayter remained active in the China trade after this short career in the east, forming a London based import business with his brother which continued until 1909.<sup>57</sup>

**Hayter, Henry Goodenough**

1888—89 - Clerk, Wilkinson & Co., Shanghai

Hayter ran a London based China import firm with his brother until 1909, see above.

**Higson, T.B.**

1867 - Clerk, W. Hargreaves, Shanghai

1872—73 - Merchant, Dickinson & Co., Shanghai

**Holliday, J.**

1845 - And family, Hongkong (Absent)

1856 - Merchant, Holliday, Wise & Co., Shanghai

1859 - Merchant, Holliday, Wise & Co., Shanghai (Absent)

1861—67 - Merchant, Holliday, Wise & Co., Hongkong (Absent, 1861, 1867)

**Hornby, Sir Edmund Grimani**

1865—76 - Chief Judge, HBM's Supreme Court for China and Japan,  
Shanghai

Hornby's time in China and Japan is recounted in his autobiography.<sup>58</sup> He had served in Constantinople, originally to oversee a loan made by Britain to Turkey, but was

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<sup>57</sup> *The London Gazette* (London, England) 26 November 1909.

<sup>58</sup> Hornby, *Sir Edmund Hornby: An Autobiography*.

most prominent as judge of the Supreme Court.<sup>59</sup> Following his return he joined an unspecified city livery company in 1879.<sup>60</sup>

**Howell, William G.**

- 1859 - Merchant, Shanghai (Absent)
- 1861—67 - Merchant, Barnet & Co., Shanghai
- 1864 - Renting Land in Shanghai

**Ilbert, A.,**

- 1865—67 - Clerk, Newbury, Elliot & Co., Shanghai
- 1868 - Broker and commission merchant, Shanghai
- 1872—74 - Merchant, Ilbert & Co., Shanghai
- 1876—84 - Merchant, Ilbert & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1876-7, 1884)

Likely the founder of Ilbert and Co., of whom later head C.J. Dudgeon would play a large role in the CA, he seems to have been uninvolved in the business by 1889 when the CA was founded.

**Irving, John Bell,**

- 1874 - Jardine Matheson Insurance offices, Hongkong
- 1876 - Clerk, Jardine Matheson & Co., Shanghai
- 1877—82 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1882)
- 1888—89 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong

Irving was a partner in Jardine Matheson, still active in the business as of the founding of the CA.<sup>61</sup> He was an unofficial member of the legislative council of Hongkong.<sup>62</sup>

**Iveson, Egbert**

- 1867—74 - Merchant, Bower, Hanbury & Co., Shanghai
- 1876—88 - Merchant, Iveson & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1882—4)

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p.94.

<sup>60</sup> “City Companies and Fagot Votes.” *Times* (London, England), 19 March 1879, p.14.

<sup>61</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.264.

<sup>62</sup> Chan Lau Kit-Ching, *China Britain and Hongkong 1895-1945* (Hongkong: The Chinese University Press, 1990), p.6.

Iveson is recorded as absent in 1892, suggesting his capital was still invested in the business despite his own return to Britain

### **Jackson, Thomas**

- 1866 - Agra Bank employee<sup>63</sup>
- 1867 - Clerk, HSBC, Hongkong
- 1868 - Accountant, HSBC, Shanghai
- 1872—76 - Manager, HSBC, Yokohama (Absent 1874)
- 1877 - Acting chief manager, HSBC, Hongkong
- 1879—89 - Chief Manager, HSBC, Hongkong (Absent 1889)

Jackson joined the CA on this last period of absence. He would remain as chief manager of the HSBC in Hongkong until 1902, and helped to found the CA's Hongkong branch, serving as its first chairman.<sup>64</sup>

### **Jackson, William**

- 1859 - Accountant, Mercantile Bank, Shanghai
- 1862—73 - Manager, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Shanghai (Absent 1865)
- 1874 - Manager, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Hongkong

### **Jardine, Sir Robert (Bart)**

- 1845 - Arrives in Hongkong<sup>65</sup>
- 1859 - Merchant, Hongkong
- 1861 - Merchant, Hongkong (Absent)

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<sup>63</sup> Frank H. H. King, 'Jackson, Sir Thomas, first baronet (1841–1915)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/48903>, last accessed 26 October 2017).

<sup>64</sup> King, 'Jackson, Sir Thomas, first baronet (1841–1915)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; Annual Report for 1893–4, available at Annual Reports, 1889–98, CHAS/A/01.

<sup>65</sup> Richard J. Grace, 'Jardine, Sir Robert, first baronet (1825–1905)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34159>, last accessed 26 October 2017); Reid, 'The Steel Frame', p.31.

Jardine was a key character in the foundation of Jardine Matheson. He retired early, although he left his capital in the business, and delegated the day to day running of the firm to William Keswick.<sup>66</sup>

**Johnstone, Alex R.**

1859 - Merchant, Amoy

1861—67 - Merchant, Tait & Co., Amoy

1865—67 - Acting Vice Consul for France, Amoy

**Jukes, M.P.**

1861—72 - Clerk, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong (Absent 1867)

On his return to Britain, Jukes became the London agent for the Jardine Matheson linked Union Insurance Society of Canton, a post he held until his retirement in 1899.<sup>67</sup>

**Kaye, William**

1865—68 - Manager, Chartered Bank, Hongkong

1872—73 - Manager, Chartered Bank, Shanghai

1874 - Manager, Chartered Bank, Hongkong

Kaye returned to Britain and served as sub manager for the HSBC in London in 1882.<sup>68</sup> He is no longer listed as working for any China linked firm by the foundation of the CA.

**Keswick, William**

1859 - Clerk, Shanghai

1861 - Clerk, Japan

1862 - Clerk, Kanagawa

1864 - Renting land in Shanghai

1865—67 - Partner / Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Shanghai

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<sup>66</sup> Grace, 'Jardine, Sir Robert, first baronet (1825–1905)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>67</sup> "The Money Market." *Times* (London, England), 29 December 1899, p.11.

<sup>68</sup> *The Chronicle and Directory for China, Japan, the Philippines & C.*, 1882 (Hongkong, 1882).

1868—89 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong (Absent 1873—74 and 1882—89)

1872—79 - Acting consul, Italy and Hawaii

Keswick was the first chairman of the CA, and held the role until 1905. He was the key figure behind Jardine Matheson in this period, second only in name to Robert Jardine, but effectively running the company from London.<sup>69</sup>

### **Kidner, William**

1868—74 - Architect, Shanghai

1876—79 - Architect, Kidner & Cory, Shanghai (Absent)

Kidner was an architect of some repute in China. He helped to build Shanghai's Holy Trinity church and also designed the buildings of the HSBC and Mercantile Banks in Shanghai.<sup>70</sup> By 1889, when the CA was founded, he was an architect for the British North Borneo Company, the concern of CA founder Alfred Dent.<sup>71</sup>

### **Kilby, E. Flint**

1874 - Clerk, Hudson, Malcom & Co., Yokohama

1876—77 - Clerk, Hudson & Co., Yokohama

1882 - Clerk, Hudson & Co., Hiogo

1888—89 - Merchant, Flint Kilby & Co., Yokohama

Kilby returned to London around the date of the creation of the CA. He continued to run the London end of Flint Kilby & Co., known as Brent & Co., until at least 1896.<sup>72</sup> In 1888 he had been the highest ranking Mason in Yokohama.

### **Lang, William**

1867 - Clerk, Yokohama

1872—88 - Merchant, Butterfield and Swire, Shanghai

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<sup>69</sup> Reid, 'The Steel Frame', pp.37-8.

<sup>70</sup> William Kidner: Basic Biographical Details (available online at [http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect\\_full.php?id=201759](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201759), last accessed 26 October 2017).

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> *The London Gazette* (London, England) 1 January 1897.

Lang was a partner in Butterfield and Swire, retiring in 1888.<sup>73</sup>

**Lapraik, John S.**

1859—62 - Clerk, Hongkong

1865—89 - Partner / Merchant, D. Lapraik & Co., Hongkong (Absent 1872—77 and 1882—89)

Lapraik was active in the D. Lapraik firm until his death in 1893. The firm itself held interests in shipping, developing from its earlier basis as a watchmakers.<sup>74</sup>

**Lemann, William**

1859 - Clerk, Foochow

1861 - Clerk, Gilman & Co., Hongkong

1862 - Clerk, Gilman & Co., Foochow

1865—67 - Partner / Merchant, Gilman & Co., Shanghai

1868—72 - Merchant, Gilman & Co., Hongkong

1873—74 - Merchant, Gilman & Co., Foochow

**Lester, Henry E.**

1867 - Clerk, F.H. Knevit & Co., Shanghai

1868 - Surveyor, China Fire Insurance Co., Shanghai

1872—73 - Builder and contractor, Shanghai

1874—89 - Architect, Shanghai

Lester was, it seems, something of a philanthropist. He founded an institute of medical research in Shanghai (of which early footage of its workings survives) and a scholarship, still extant, and distributed under the care of John Swire & Sons.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Hook, *A Guide to the Papers of John Swire and Sons Limited*, introduction.

<sup>74</sup> Ian Ruxton, *The Correspondence of Sir Ernest Satow, British Minister in Japan, 1895-1900 Volume 4* (Ian Ruxton, Kysuhu Institute of Technology, 2014), p.141 note 2; Wright, (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China*, p.207.

<sup>75</sup> *Henry Lester institute of Medical Research, Shanghai reel two* (available online at <https://archive.org/details/HenryLesterinstituteofmedicalresearch2-wellcome>, last accessed 26 October 2017); Henry Lester Trust Ltd. (available online at <https://www.postgraduatestudentships.co.uk/study-or-funding/prof-doctorates/henry-lester-trust>, last accessed 26 October 2017).



**Lewis, George**

1865 - Nagasaki

1867—68 - Merchant, Rainbow, Lewis & Co.,

1872—79 - Commission Agent, Ship and General Broker, Morris & Lewis,  
Shanghai

1882 - Ship Broker, Lewis & Hopkins, Shanghai

1884 - Shanghai

**Lucas, Clement**

1861—63 - Clerk, Bain, Tate & Co., Shanghai

1867—68 - Merchant, Bain, Tate & Co., Shanghai

1873—77 - Merchant, Bain & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1876)

1879 - Assistant, Brown, Jones & Co., Hongkong

1882 - Merchant, Lucas & Co., Shanghai

**MacAndrew, J.**

1848—50 - Mercantile Assistant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong

1859—62 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong

MacAndrew remained active in the China trade following his return to Britain.<sup>76</sup> He remained a partner in the firm of Matheson and Co. from at least 1870 to 1886, but was no longer a partner by 1900.<sup>77</sup> As late as 1902 he was involved in London in the running of the Indo-China Steam Navigation Co., a Jardine Matheson subsidiary.<sup>78</sup>

**Maccall, Edward**

1867—68 - Manager, Chartered Bank, Shanghai

1872—73 - Manager, Agra Bank, Shanghai

Maccall was resident in London at the founding of the CA, marrying Eliza Margaret in Notting Hill in that same year.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> "At the half-yearly General Meeting." *Times* (London, England), 19 January 1882, p.13. "Public Companies." *Times* (London, England), 12 November 1887, p.13.

<sup>77</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.264.

<sup>78</sup> "Railways and Other Companies." *Times* (London, England), 24 March 1902, p.5.

<sup>79</sup> "Marriages." *Times* (London, England), 9 September 1899, p.1.

**MacEwen, Alexander Palmer**

1872—79 - Clerk, Holliday, Wise & Co., Hongkong

1888 - Merchant, Holliday Wise & Co., Hongkong

MacEwen was, as of the founding of the CA, listed as a merchant for Holliday, Wise & Co., resident in Manchester. He was also an unofficial member of the Hongkong legislative council in 1887.<sup>80</sup>

**Maitland, J.A.**

1859 - Clerk, Shanghai

1862 - Clerk, Thorne Bros. & Co., Shanghai

1864 - Renting land in Shanghai

1865 - Partner, Thorne Bros. & Co., Shanghai

1867 - Clerk, Thorne Bros. & CO., Shanghai

1868—76 - Merchant, Thorne Bros. & Co., Shanghai

1877—89 - Merchant, Maitland & Co., Shanghai (Absent)

Maitland returned to Britain, but remained involved in Maitland & Co., presumably running the London end of the business. He was also a director for the China Shippers Mutual Steam Navigation Company in 1882 and continued his involvement until at least 1890, and involved with both the British North Borneo Company and the Mercantile Bank of India in 1898 and 1912 respectively.<sup>81</sup>

**Manger, A.T**

1867—74 - Clerk, Douglas Lapraik & Co., Hongkong (Absent 1873)

1876—82 - Merchant, Douglas Lapraik & Co., Hongkong

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<sup>80</sup> "From the London Gazette, Tuesday, December 13." *Times* (London, England), 14 December 1887, p.11.

<sup>81</sup> "The List of Application for shares will Close on or before Friday." *Times* (London, England), 02 December 1882, p.14. "Railways and Other Companies." *Times* (London, England), 07 April 1891, p.11. "Railways and Other Companies." *Times* (London, England), 27 Jul 1898, p.13. "Mercantile Bank of India (Limited)." *Times* (London, England), 03 April 1912, p.20.

**Markes, C.R.**

No information available

**McIver, Alex**

1872—82 - Superintendent, P&O, Hongkong

**McLean, David**

1862 - Sub accountant / acting manager, Oriental Bank, Hongkong<sup>82</sup>

1864 - Acting manager, Oriental Bank, Shanghai<sup>83</sup>

1875—73 - Manager, HSBC, Shanghai<sup>84</sup>

McLean had served as the first manager of the HSBC Shanghai Branch.<sup>85</sup> On his return to London McLean became the manager of the London Branch of the HSBC. He left this role in 1889, the year the CA was founded, but did not sever all links with the bank and continued to serve on the London consulting committee until 1893. Frank H. King considers Mclean to have been ‘one of the most important overseas bankers of his generation.’<sup>86</sup>

**Middleton, W.N.**

1865 - Clerk, Gilman & Co., Hongkong

1867 - Broker and Auctioneer, Hongkong

1872—76 - Share Broker / Broker, Anton & Middleton, Hongkong

**Mullins, T.L.**

1863 - Sub-agent, Chartered Bank, Batavia<sup>87</sup>

As of 1889 when the CA was founded, Mullins was the London manager of the Queensland National Bank.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> King, ‘McLean, David (1833–1908)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Collis, *Wayfoong: The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation*, p.24.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> MacKenzie, *Realms of Silver: One Hundred Years of Banking in the East*, p.119.

<sup>88</sup> “Charities & C.” *Times* (London, England), 01 May 1888, p.13.

**Myburgh, P.A.**

1865—68 - Barrister at Law, Shanghai

Myburgh continued to practice law until at least 1885.<sup>89</sup> Although there is no suggestion he dealt with China related cases, his position in the CA, and his position on its committee, was possibly due to a combination of his sojourn in China and his current position as active in the legal community.

**Nelson, Horatio Harrington**

1867—68 - Clerk, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Shanghai

1872 - Acting accountant, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Shanghai

1874 - Acting agent, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Foochow

1876—79 - Manager, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Hongkong

**Parr, Richard B.**

1865 - Manager, Alfred Wilkinson & Co., Hongkong

1867 - Clerk, Alfred Wilkinson & Co., Hongkong

1872—82 - Merchant, Tilson, Hermann & Co., Manila

1872—74 - Acting Consul for Germany, Manila

**Pollard, Edward H.**

1848 - Clerk to chief justice, Supreme Court, Hongkong

1850 - Articled clerk, Hongkong

1861—74 - Barrister & Notary Public, Hongkong (Absent 1872—4)

**Pook, Chas.**

No information is available regarding Chas Pook, however, he may have been linked to the firm of John Pook and Co., who were the London agents for the Shanghai Municipal Council, although at a later date than the CA's foundation.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> "Queens Bench Division." *Times* (London, England), 01 December 1885, p.15.

<sup>90</sup> Shanghai Municipal Council. Report for the Year 1902 and Budget for the Year 1903, p.30 (available online at <http://www.bnasia.org/BN/Periodiques?ID=64>, last accessed 6 June 2018).

**Provand, Andrew Dryburgh, (M.P.)**

1865—67 - Merchant / Partner, Provand & Daly, Shanghai

1868 - Auctioneer, Alex Davis, Shanghai

1872—82 - Merchant, A. Provand & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1876 and 1879—82)

Provand remained an active Manchester merchant until at least 1889.<sup>91</sup> He was an MP from 1886—1900, and contributed in the house regarding China on a number of occasions, though did not represent the CA when he did so.<sup>92</sup>

**Pugh, William**

1865 - Tea inspector, Gilman & Co, Shanghai

1867 - Clerk, Gilman & Co., Shanghai

1868 - Clerk, Gilman & Co., Kiukang

1872—73 - Merchant, Pugh & Co., Hankow

1873 - Chairman, Hankow Municipal Council

1874—77 - Merchant, Evans, Pugh & Co., Hankow

1879—89 - Merchant, Evans, Pugh & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1884—89)

**Reid, David**

1864 - Renting land in Shanghai

1865 - Merchant, Shanghai (Absent)

1867—73 - Merchant, Reid & Co., Shanghai

1874—77 - Merchant, Reid, Evans & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1877)

The firm Reid, Evans and Co. continued to trade using Reid's name in Shanghai until at least 1892. There is no indication of his continued involvement with the firm in directories, however, and it seems likely he had withdrawn his capital.

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<sup>91</sup> 'Provand, Andrew Dryburgh', *Who Was Who*, A & C Black, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing plc, 1920–2016; online edn, Oxford University Press, 2014 ; online edn, April 2014 (<http://www.ukwhoswho.com/view/article/oupww/whowaswho/U190100>, last accessed 26 October 2017).

<sup>92</sup> See Contributions in Hansard (available online at <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/people/mr-andrew-provand-1/>, last accessed 26 October 2017).

**Rennie, Sir Richard**

1879—82 - Judge, HBM's Court, Yokohama (Absent 1882)

1884—89 - Chief Justice, HBM's Supreme Court for China and Japan, Shanghai (Absent 1889)

**Schmidt, W.**

1861—62 - Clerk, Fletcher & Co., Hongkong

1865 - Partner, Fletcher & Co., Hongkong

1867 - Clerk, Giles & Co., Amoy

1868 - Clerk, Gundry & Co., Shanghai

1872—74 - Secretary, China & Japan Marine Insurance Co., Shanghai

**Sentence, W.V.**

1879 - Clerk, W. Forrester & Co., Shanghai

1882 - Merchant, Shanghai

1884 - White & Welch's, Shanghai

1887 - Trading tea, Shanghai<sup>93</sup>

1888—89 - Merchant, Shanghai

**Spence, W.D.**

1872—77 - British Consular Assistant, Shanghai

1879 - Acting Registrar of Shipping, British Consulate, Shanghai

**Strachan, W.M.**

1861—62 - Clerk, A. Cushny, Shanghai

1867—82 - Merchant, Strachan and Thomas, Yokohama (Absent 1872—73 and 1882)

1888—89 - Merchant, Strachan & Co., Kobe (Absent)

By 1892 Strachan was still active in his own eponymous business, and is listed as running the London end of the concern in the directory for that year.

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<sup>93</sup> "From the London Gazette, Friday, May 20." *Times* (London, England), 21 May 1887, p.15.

**Sutherland, Thomas (M.P.)**

1859 - Clerk, P&O, Hongkong

1861 - Chief Clerk, P&O, Hongkong

1865—67 - Superintendent, P&O, Hongkong (Absent 1867)

Sutherland left China permanently in 1868. Returning to London, he rose to be chairman and managing director of the P&O in 1881. He exercised a firm grip on the company, remaining in charge until he found a viable successor, in 1914, in Lord Inchcape.<sup>94</sup>

**Swire, John L. Samuel**

1866—67 - Shanghai

John Swire spent less than a year in East Asia to extend his British business into the great mercantile house that bore his name. After founding Butterfield and Swire, he returned to run the London portion of the business, John Swire & Sons. Butterfield and Swire remained the closely linked Eastern part of the firm.<sup>95</sup> He made four further visits to East Asia to ensure the company was functioning well during his lifetime.<sup>96</sup>

**Talbot-Hassell, John Gordon**

1867—74 - Clerk, Birley & Co., Hongkong

1876—82 - Merchant, Birley & Co., Hongkong

Talbot-Hassell died in 1925.<sup>97</sup> His time in Hongkong was punctuated by at least one home leave, in 1875, upon which his father gave him the painting *The Northern Whale Fishery*; the *Swan* and *Isabella* as a gift.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Harcourt, 'Sutherland, Sir Thomas (1834–1922)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>95</sup> Hook, *A Guide to the Papers of John Swire and Sons Limited*, introduction.

<sup>96</sup> Robert Bickers, 'Swire, John Samuel (1825–1898)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39475>, last accessed 26 October 2017).

<sup>97</sup> "Deaths." *Times* (London, England), 3 November 1925, p.1.

<sup>98</sup> *Sale 7261: Exploration and Travel with the Polar Sale Including the Amundsen Collection* (available online at <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/john-ward-of-hull-1798-1849-the-4784296-details.aspx>, last accessed 26 October 2017).

**Thin, George (M.D.)**

1867—72 - M.D. and Physician, Shanghai

Thin remained an active doctor on his return from East Asia. He published on taking healthy summer holidays at sea in 1890, and was the surgeon general for Cornwall in 1892.<sup>99</sup>

**Thomas, D.H.**

1876—79 - Clerk, Adamson, Bell & Co., Foochow

**Turnbull, William A.**

1867—72 - Clerk, Birley, W & Co., Shanghai

1873—77 - Merchant, Birley, W & Co., Shanghai

1882—89 - Merchant, Turnbull, Howie & Co., Shanghai (Absent)

Turnbull continued to be listed as absent following his return, suggesting he continued to have his capital placed in the eponymous company.

**Wade, Sir Thomas**

1843 - Interpreter, Hongkong Garrison<sup>100</sup>

1845 - Interpreter, Hongkong Court<sup>101</sup>

1850 - Assistant Chinese Secretary, Hongkong

1859 - Chinese Secretary, Hongkong

1861 - Chinese Secretary, British Embassy, Shanghai

1862 - Chinese Secretary, British Legation, Peking

1865 - British Charge d'affairs, Peking

1867—68 - Chinese Secretary, British Legation, Peking

1872—73 - British Minister Plenipotentiary, Peking

1874 - British Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary, Peking

1877—82 - British Minister Plenipotentiary, Peking

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<sup>99</sup> "Shipping." *Times* (London, England), 2 Jul. 1890, p.2. "Banquet at the Mansion-House." *Times* (London, England), 24 March 1892, p.6.

<sup>100</sup> Ven, 'Wade, Sir Thomas Francis (1818–1895)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.



Following his return Wade remained linked to China, becoming professor of Chinese at Cambridge, although he taught no students. He is perhaps best known for developing the Wade-Giles system of translation from Chinese, a standard for over a century.<sup>102</sup>

**Watmore, Robert**

1859 - Clerk, Shanghai

1861 - Clerk, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong

1865 - Clerk, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hankow

**Webb, Edward**

1862—74 - Clerk, Russell & Co., Shanghai

Returning to England, Webb became a director for the Mortgage and agency company of Ceylon.<sup>103</sup>

**Whittall, Jas.**

1847 - Canton

1850 - Mercantile Assistant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Canton

1859 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong

1861—62 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Shanghai

1865 - Partner, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong

1867 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Shanghai

1868—74 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Hongkong (Absent 1868)

1874 - Acting Consul for Hawaii

Whittall left Hongkong in 1875, and founded his own company, J. Whittall & Co., ending his partnership in Jardine Matheson and Co., that lasted from 1858—76.<sup>104</sup>

This new company was a primarily London and Ceylon based concern, which was still

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> “The Mortgage and Agency Company of.” *Times* (London, England), 18 November 1879, p.13.

<sup>104</sup> G.B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-book of Early Hongkong* (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2005), p.161; Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.264.

extant as of at least 1903.<sup>105</sup> He was also recorded in 1888 and 1889 directories as a director of the Chartered Bank in London.

### **Whitall, Edward**

1863 — Jardine Matheson & Co., Japan<sup>106</sup>

1867—74 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Shanghai

1876 - Merchant, Jardine Matheson & Co., Yokohama

Whitall was a partner in Jardine Matheson from 1864—75.<sup>107</sup> He had been involved in negotiations over silk production in Japan for Jardine Matheson as early as 1863, though in an unspecified role.<sup>108</sup>

### **Wilson, G.B.**

1879 - Acting Accountant, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Shanghai

1882 - Accountant, Chartered Mercantile Bank, Shanghai

### **Wood, H.W.**

1853—55 - Assistant, Syme & Co., Singapore

1858—59 - Assistant, Borneo Co., Singapore

1868 - Partner, Gilfillan, Wood & Co., Singapore

1869—71 - Partner, Gilfillan, Wood & Co., (absent)

1874 - Gilfillan, Wood & Co., Singapore

1876—77 - Gilfillan, Wood & Co., Europe

1879 - Merchant, Gilfillan, Wood & Co., Singapore (Absent)

1888—89 - Merchant, Gilfillan Wood & Co., Singapore and Penang (Absent)

### **Youd, F.M.**

1865 - Clerk, W.R. Adamson & Co., Foochow

1867—68 - Clerk, W.R. Adamson & Co., Shanghai

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<sup>105</sup> Arnold Wright (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon: Its History, People, Commerce, Industries and Resources* (London: Lloyds, 1907), p.429; "Miscellaneous Companies." *Times* (London, England), 17 April 1891, p.15.

<sup>106</sup> Debin Ma, *Textiles in the Pacific, 1500-1900* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), p.197

<sup>107</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.264.

<sup>108</sup> Ma, *Textiles in the Pacific, 1500-1900*, p.197.

1872 - Tea inspector, W.R. Adamson & Co., Shanghai  
1873 - Merchant, W.R. Adamson & Co., Shanghai (Absent)  
1874—89 - Merchant, Adamson, Bell & Co., Shanghai (Absent 1884—89)

Youd had been a partner as early as 1870, and presumably remained so when Adamson, Bell & Co., was brought to court over unpaid debts, a case in which fellow CA founder C.L. Grant gave evidence.<sup>109</sup>

### **Young W.S.**

1865—68 - Clerk, Jarvis, Thorburn & Co., Yokohama  
1872—73 - Clerk, Gilman & Co., Hongkong  
1874—77 - Merchant, Gilman & Co., Foochow  
1876—77 - Danish Consul, Foochow  
1879—89 - Merchant, Gilman & Co., Hongkong (Absent 1889)

Young was still recorded as absent from the firm as of 1892, suggesting his continued involvement.

### **Zimmern, Alfred**

1868 - Manager, Reiss & Co., Hongkong  
1872—73 - Merchant, Reiss & Co., Shanghai

Zimmern became a partner in the firm Reiss Bros. at an unspecified date, and gave testimony to a commission on shipping rings in this role in 1909. Reiss Bros. were a large shipper of cotton goods to China, and perhaps the British end of the firm Reiss & Co.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> “Queens Bench Division.” *Times* (London, England), 4 February 1892, p.13.

<sup>110</sup> Falkus, *The Blue Funnel Legend*, p.127.

## **Appendix B: Key China firms**

Listed below are a number of firms or business groups which either gave the CA substantial financial support, had representatives hold officer's posts within the Association, or later retained a permanent seat on the Association's general committee. This is by no means a comprehensive list, and is intended simply to give the reader some idea of the types of firms who backed the CA most prominently, or who are mentioned consistently throughout the Thesis.

Largely, the information below is drawn from either company histories, or a select few histories of wider British trade in East Asia. The intention has been to keep the information below concise, and relevant to the Thesis, rather than to produce an exhaustive history of these firms.

### **British multinational firms:**

These firms are those involved in trade, shipping and financing not only in China, but around the Globe, from bases in Britain or China.

#### **Jardine Matheson Group**

The Jardine Matheson Group was originally formed of two companies, Jardine Matheson & Co., based in China and founded in 1832, and Matheson & Co., London based and formed in 1848.<sup>1</sup> The two had a considerable overlap in partners and directors, before Matheson & Co. was bought out by Jardine Matheson in 1912.<sup>2</sup> The Jardine Matheson group began, as so many China based firms, by importing opium from India.<sup>3</sup> Soon after, however, they diversified. Recent work has shown the role they played in facilitating the movement of Chinese labourers in the middle of the nineteenth century, and as early as the 1830's, the steamer *Jardine* had arrived in the East, marking their move into shipping, with involvement in Insurance agencies coming in the same decade.<sup>4</sup>

Opium was no longer traded after Sassoons cornered the market in 1872, and this move saw their position as a leading China coast firm consolidated as they moved from opium traders with some 'general trading, shipping and financial activities' into

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<sup>1</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.264 lists the directors and partners of the firms.

<sup>2</sup> Reid, 'The Steel Frame', p.43; Jones, *Merchants to multinationals*, p.57.

<sup>3</sup> Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, pp.30-1.

<sup>4</sup> Neal, *Jardine Matheson and Chinese Migration in the British Empire, 1833-1853*; Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.257.

a 'diversified conglomerate' with multinational investments.<sup>5</sup> In China this saw the establishment of silk filatures in Shanghai, which were followed later by a series of cotton mills under the Ewo (and later King Yik and Yangtzepoo) names, and sugar refining facilities in Hongkong.<sup>6</sup> Of greater importance, however, were moves into financial services. The Ewo bank was established in Peking in 1870, and followed later by Jardine Matheson's most notable later move in China as they founded, jointly with the HSBC, the BCC for development of railway concessions in China in 1898.<sup>7</sup> Outside China, the firm invested heavily in mining in Spain, California, Russia and South Africa, banking in Iran, and an oil company in Peru.<sup>8</sup>

### **Swire Group**

The second great East Asian firm after Jardine Matheson, the Swire group was a relative latecomer to the trade. They began operations in 1866, as Butterfield and Swire in East Asia, adding to the already established John Swire and Sons in London, and filling the void left by the collapse of Dent's in the same year.<sup>9</sup> This Butterfield and Swire partnership was largely based on textile shipments from Yorkshire to Shanghai.<sup>10</sup> Unlike Jardine Matheson, Swires quickly moved away from all trade, and became a firm concerned mostly with Shipping. They began by acting as agents for Alfred Holt & Co's. Ocean Steamship Company, which the Swire-owned China Navigation company would act as a feeder for on the China Coast.<sup>11</sup> Before long Swire became a larger shipping concern than Jardine Matheson.<sup>12</sup>

Alongside this, they diversified in a similar manner to Jardine Matheson. This began with the development of manufacturing concerns in sugar under the Taikoo name.<sup>13</sup> Later, the Taikoo name was also applied to a Dockyard and Engineering

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<sup>5</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.258; Jones, *Merchants to multinationals*, p.57.

<sup>6</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, pp.258-60; Connel, The applicability of resource-based theory to the interpretation of strategic management in Jardine Matheson, p.83.

<sup>7</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.258-9; Connel, The applicability of resource-based theory to the interpretation of strategic management in Jardine Matheson, p.83.

<sup>8</sup> Jones, *Merchants to multinationals*, p.57.

<sup>9</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.258.

<sup>10</sup> Hook, *A Guide to the Papers of John Swire and Sons Limited*, introduction.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Jones, *Merchants to multinationals*, pp. 72-3.

<sup>13</sup> Jones, *Merchants to multinationals*, pp. 72-3; See also Crisswell, *The Taipans: Hongkongs Merchant Princes*, chapter ten.

Company (founded 1901) and the Taikoo Chinese Navigation Company (registered 1930).<sup>14</sup> Like Jardine Matheson, Swires also held a number of insurance interests.<sup>15</sup>

### **Dodwells**

Dodwells began as a Shanghai trading and shipping firm in 1858. They were reconstituted first as Adamson Bell and Co., in 1867, and then Dodwells in the late 1880's when George Benjamin Dodwell took over the falling firm. It was reconstructed as a London based multinational in 1899, and developed trade and shipping links with East Asia and North America. Later these would develop into manufacturing businesses, exporting canned salmon from Vancouver, for example, or into direct investment in tea and coconut plantations.<sup>16</sup>

### **Sassoon**

Sassoons are a less known group, of whom little history exists, and as a relatively minor firm appear less in the thesis than those above. D. Sassoon are the main focus here, rather than the other family firm, E.D. Sassoon. D. Sassoon, by offering credits to opium growers, had become by far the largest traders of Indian opium to China by the late nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> Contemporary sources, however, attest that they dealt on a wider scale than this, importing Indian cotton and holding, though on a smaller scale than others, agencies for shipping firms (the Apcar line) and insurance (Norwich Fire Insurance Co.) as well as shares in the HSBC and many other prominent Hongkong based firms.<sup>18</sup> A brief history of the Sassoon family itself can be found in Crisswell's *The Taipans*.<sup>19</sup>

### **British trading / manufacturing firms**

These firms were less influential, and dealt often only as traders between China and Britain, or as producers of goods in China for export.

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<sup>14</sup> Hook, *A Guide to the Papers of John Swire and Sons Limited*, introduction.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Jones, *Merchants to multinationals*, p.58.

<sup>17</sup> Meyer, 'Baghdadi Jewish Merchants in Shanghai and the Opium Trade'.

<sup>18</sup> Wright, (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China*, p.224.

<sup>19</sup> Colin N. Crisswell, *The Taipans: Hongkongs Merchant Princes*, chapter eight.

### **Ilbert and Co**

As with many smaller Shanghai based firms, little is known about Ilbert and Co. Potentially, this is symptomatic of a wider problem in studying the history of British businesses based in Shanghai, as records were likely lost during either the Sino-Japanese war and subsequent occupation of Shanghai, or during the later PRC takeover.

As of 1904—the time at which Ilbert and Co are most important to this study—the firm were general managers of the Laou Kung Mow Cotton Spinning Company, and held a number of small insurance agencies. They held links to sugar and rubber planting in the Malay states, but seem not to have had any direct investment there themselves. Alongside this, they were general importers, selling to Chinese partners on indent terms.<sup>20</sup>

### **British financial services**

These financial services provided the funding necessary for the expansion of British interests in China, be it by providing loans to allow mercantile firms to operate, or by providing loans to the Chinese government itself.

### **HSBC**

The HSBC was, by the time of the foundation of the CA, well established as the leading financier in East Asia. Founded by CA founding member Thomas Sutherland in 1865, all major Far Eastern mercantile firms (with the exception of Jardine Matheson) subscribed capital.<sup>21</sup> The corporation experienced great growth in the following years under the command of another CA founder, Sir Thomas Jackson.<sup>22</sup>

The bank's main importance to this thesis is twofold. Firstly, through its already mentioned co-operation with Jardine Matheson in founding the BCC to provide finance and expertise to develop railway concessions in China. Secondly, the HSBC gained great prominence for its work in providing large loans to the Chinese government in an attempt to modernise the country. These began as purely British efforts, but later included international co-operation through international banking

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<sup>20</sup> Wright, (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China*, p.608.

<sup>21</sup> Maurice Collis, *Wayfoong: The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation*, pp.22-4.

<sup>22</sup> See appendix A.

consortiums, led by Sir Charles Stewart Addis.<sup>23</sup> Cain and Hopkins have argued that such financial investment in China largely came to dictate British policy foreign policy towards the country.<sup>24</sup> A number of histories focusing purely on the HSBC, often commissioned by the bank, are available to the interested reader.<sup>25</sup>

### **Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China**

A smaller concern than the HSBC, the Chartered Bank was the older of the two institutions. The bank was founded in 1852, and its Royal Charter granted the following year.<sup>26</sup> A branch was founded in Shanghai in 1858, and business focused on lending to those involved in the opium trade, or in import and export of cotton.<sup>27</sup> Entering our period of interest, the 1870's found the bank in some trouble, entering the decade with no dividends being paid and shares quoted below issue price. J.H. Gwyther, later a fixture on CA committees, took charge at this time, and went some way to restoring the banks fortunes.<sup>28</sup>

Although successful, it was regarded as something of a second rate institution, never quite up to the standards of the HSBC—and with this excluded from much of the British finance provided to the Chinese government that would come to mark the period around the turn of the Century, and catapult the HSBC to predominance.<sup>29</sup> It would later be involved in foreign exchange, co-operating with the Chinese founded Shanghai Bank.<sup>30</sup>

### **British shipping firms**

These firms—unlike the multinational traders mentioned above—were purely providers of shipping services, though no less influential for this.

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<sup>23</sup> Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*.

<sup>24</sup> Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000*.

<sup>25</sup> For example, Frank H.H. King, *The History of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Vol 1-4* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987-91); Kynaston, *The Lion Wakes*.

<sup>26</sup> Mackenzie, *Realms of Silver: One Hundred Years of Banking in the East*, p.5 and p.20.

<sup>27</sup> Zhaojin Ji, *A History of Modern Shanghai Banking: The Rise and Decline of China's Finance Capitalism* (New York :M.E. Sharpe, 2003), p.43.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp.157-160.

<sup>29</sup> Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.26-7, pp.95-6, p.167 and p.172.

<sup>30</sup> Ji, *A History of Modern Shanghai Banking*, p.120.



### The P&O

The history of the P&O Company, as relevant to this study, is limited. It had been founded upon mail contracts, and later carried a substantial amount of opium.<sup>31</sup> As discussed in the main body of this work, they were, by the time of the CA's foundation and later involvement in the opium question, a general shipper in East Asia, having reduced their reliance upon opium.<sup>32</sup> The firm was run somewhat autocratically by CA member Thomas Sutherland until 1914, when it was merged with the Inchcape Group, though keeping its separate identity.<sup>33</sup>

Further information for the interested reader is to be found in Harcourt's study *Flagships of Imperialism*, but as the preface to the work notes, this does not cover the history of the P&O beyond 1867, although it had originally intended to do so.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Freda Harcourt, *Flagships of Imperialism: The P&O Company and the politics of empire from its origins to 1867* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), introduction

<sup>32</sup> Harcourt, 'Black Gold: P&O and the Opium Trade, 1847-1914', p.83.

<sup>33</sup> Harcourt, 'Sutherland, Sir Thomas (1834–1922)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

<sup>34</sup> Harcourt, *Flagships of Imperialism*, preface.

### **Appendix C: Students examined at the China Association School of Chinese, 1909**

Listed below are employment histories for graduates of the CA school of Chinese for the year 1909. Histories are drawn from the Chronicle and Directory for China for the years 1912, 1917 and 1920 available online at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/history/customs/ancestors/directories.html> (last accessed 29 October 2018).

#### **Forbes, D.B.**

1912 - Agent, HSBC, Bangkok

1917 - Agent, HSBC, Canton

#### **Hitchcock, L.H.**

1912 - Assistant, HSBC, Hankow

#### **MacKenzie, G.L.**

1912 - Assistant, HSBC, Tientsin

#### **Macrae, M.**

1912 - Assistant, HSBC, Shanghai

1917 - Assistant, Guthrie & Co., Shanghai

1920 - Assistant, Brinkmann & Co., Shanghai

#### **Moore, J.R.**

1917 - Installation manager, Asiatic Petroleum Co., Kewkiang

#### **Oliver, M.B.**

1912 - Sub accountant, Chartered Bank, Singapore

1917 - Sub-agent, Chartered Bank, Singapore

#### **Parke, W.**

1912—17 - Assistant, HSBC, Peking

1920 - Assistant, HSBC, Shanghai

**Rickford, L.T.R.**

1912 - Sub accountant, Chartered Bank, Singapore

**Shaw, R.A.**

1912 - Assistant, HSBC, Yokohama

**Shipway, G.W.**

1920 - Assistant, Asiatic Petroleum Co., Chunking

**Thomas, W.**

1912—17 - Sub accountant, Chartered Bank, Tientsin

## **Appendix D: List of chairmen and vice chairmen**

Below are lists of the CA Chairmen and Vice Chairmen, alongside the dates they held the posts, and the interests they most likely represented. Where the source of this information is not present in the text, or in the annual reports for the years in which these men held these posts, a reference is provided.

### **Chairmen**

**William Keswick** - Jardine Matheson Group (Jardine Matheson & Co.)

1889-1890 and 1892-1905

**Alfred Dent** - Dent Brothers & Co.

1891-2

**J.H. Scott** - Swire Group

1906-7

**Charles Dudgeon** - Ilbert & Co.

1907-9

**F. Anderson** - Ilbert & Co.

1910-11 and 1914-20

**George Jamieson** - Jardine Matheson Group / HSBC (BCC)

1911-1913

**David Landale** - Jardine Matheson Group (Jardine Matheson & Co.)

1921-23

**L.N. Leefe** - Jardine Matheson Group

1924-27

**Stanley H. Dodwell** - Dodwell & Co.

1928-30

**S.F. Mayers** - Jardine Matheson Group / HSBC (BCC)

1931-33

**D.G.M. Bernard** - Jardine Matheson Group (Matheson & Co.)

1934-36

**George Warren Swire** - Swire Group (John Swire & Sons)

1937-39

**Brigadier General C.R. Woodroffe** - Pekin Syndicate

1940-42

**W.B. Kennet** - Morris, Ward-Jones, Kennet & Co.

1943-45

**W.J. Keswick** - Jardine Matheson Group (Matheson & Co.)

1946-50

**J.K. Swire** - Swire Group (John Swire & Sons)

1951-54

**Sir Arthur Morse** - HSBC (recently retired) <sup>1</sup>

1955

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<sup>1</sup> Though retired from his position within the management of the bank in 1953, Morse was still instrumental as the “permanent” chairman of [the] consultative committee’ in London. See Frank H. King, ‘Morse, Sir Arthur (1892–1967)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50275>, last accessed 27 October 2017).

## **Vice-Chairmen**

**Alfred Dent** - Dent Brothers & Co.

1892-1906

**George Jamieson** - Jardine Matheson Group / HSBC (BCC)

1907-1910

**D.C. Rutherford** - Collins & Co.<sup>2</sup>

1911-1913 and 1920-23

**Robert H. Hill** - Bradley & Co.<sup>3</sup>

1914

**Charles Henderson Ross** - Jardine Matheson<sup>4</sup>

1916-1919

**Sir Gershom Stewart** - Ex M.P.

1924

**Stanley H. Dodwell** - Dodwell & Co.

1925-27

**H.W. Looker** - M.P.

1928-29

**S.F. Mayers** - Jardine Matheson Group / HSBC (BCC)

1930

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<sup>2</sup> *The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c for the year 1910* (Hongkong: Daily Press Office, 1910), p.762.

<sup>3</sup> *The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines & C., with which are incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and hong list for the Far East, for the year 1912* (Hongkong: Daily Press Office, 1912), p.1081.

<sup>4</sup> Keswick (ed.), *The Thistle and the Jade*, p.265.

**D.G.M. Bernard** - Jardine Matheson Group (Matheson & Co.)

1931-33

**W.B. Kennet** - Morris, Ward-Jones, Kennet & Co.

1934-36

**A.W. Burkill** - A.R. Burkill & Sons, Ltd. (Shanghai)

1937-39

**George Warren Swire** - Swire Group (John Swire & Sons)

1940-44

**W.J. Keswick** - Jardine Matheson Group (Matheson & Co.)

1945

**G.E. Mitchell** - CA Secretary

1946-52

**W.R. Cockburn** - Chartered Bank

1953-54

**J.K. Swire** - Swire Group (John Swire and Sons)

1955

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Bishop, Isabella, *Korea and her Neighbours* (Fleming H. Revell, 1898)

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